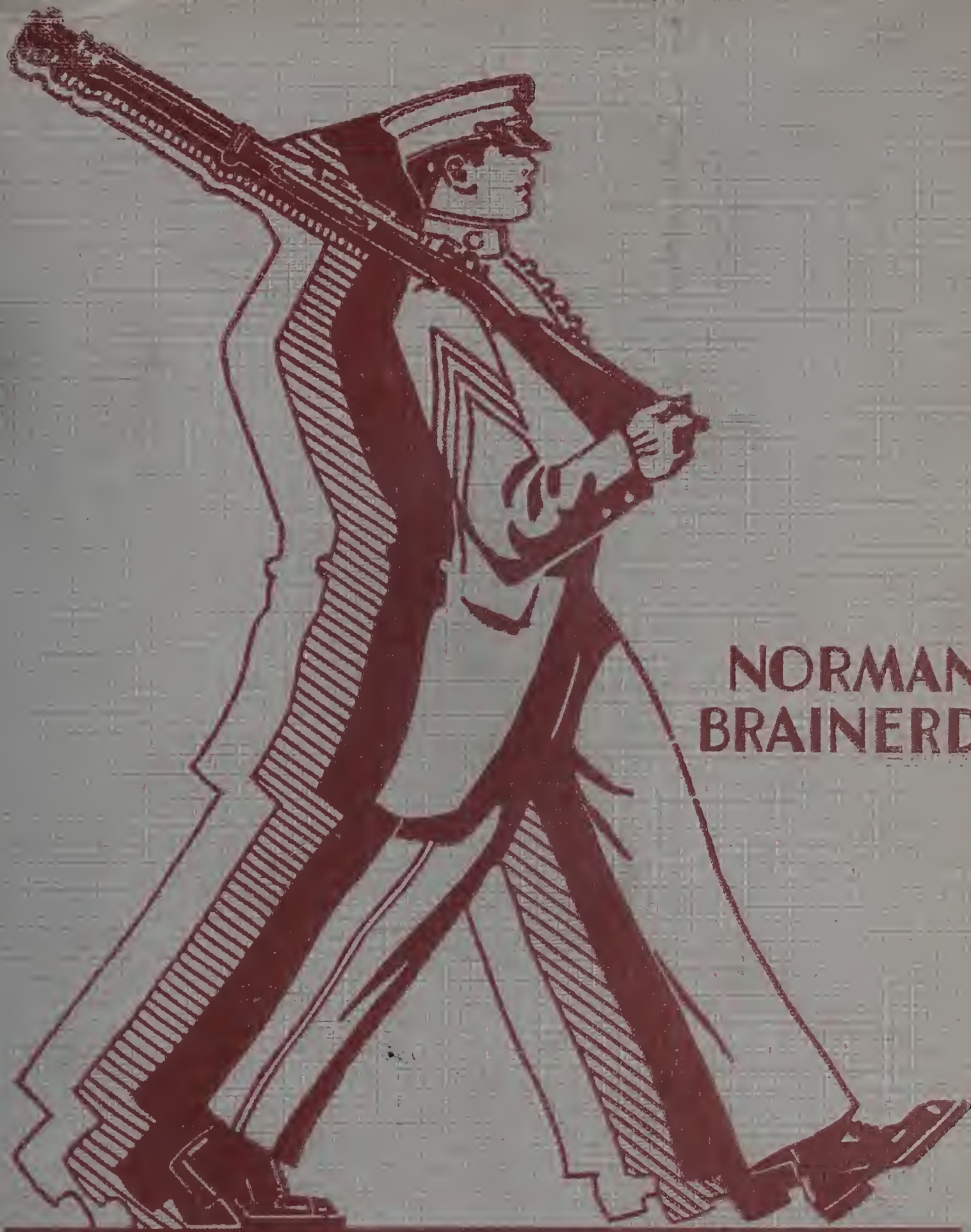




NORMAN
BRAINERD

The **CADET
SERGEANT**



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SCHOOL AND COLLEGE
STORIES

By
NORMAN BRAINERD

Illustrated

WINNING HIS SHOULDER STRAPS
WINNING THE EAGLE PRIZE
WINNING THE JUNIOR CUP
THE CADET SERGEANT

LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO., BOSTON

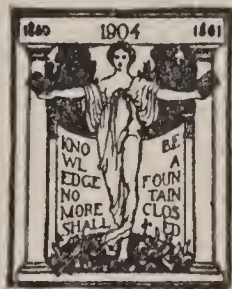


IN TWO POWERFUL STROKES HE WAS BESIDE A STRUGGLING
BOY.—*Page 113.*

The Cadet Sergeant

By
NORMAN BRAINERD *pseud.*
Fuller, Samuel Richard
"

Illustrated by
HAROLD CUE ✓



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THE CADET SERGEANT

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B. C. H. 10/7/30

*To my Son,
John Peters Fuller,
This book is affectionately dedicated
By the Author,
S. R. Fuller, Jr.,
"Norman Brainerd"*

From a letter of

JOHN CHATHAM,
FOUNDER OF
THE CHATHAM MILITARY SCHOOL.

Dated January 24, 1852.

“I would like a school where boys can have plenty of play, self-government, and study; where manliness of heart and mind are its highest teachings: that they always may live courageously, loyally, cheerfully. Hence I would be happy should the motto of this new School be:

FORTITER, FIDELITER, FELICITER.”

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The Cadet Sergeant

CHAPTER I

A CHALLENGE

WHIRR . . . r-r-r . . . Whang!

A football landed squarely between the shoulders of John H. Hayes.

"Wow! Ouch! Have a heart!" Johnny swung around. "That was some pass, Porky! Are you going to try to do all the passing this fall?"

"That's what a good right half-back is for," laughed Porky Taylor from thirty yards away.

"All muscle! No brains!" scoffed Johnny as he came up to Porky.

"Listen, Cuckoo," said Porky; "what's all the row about?" He pointed toward a group of gesticulating cadets from which his pass had drawn Johnny.

"It's bad business, I'm afraid," confided Johnny, sotto voce. "St. James Durham has just challenged us for another competitive year."

“Fine!” grinned Porky as his blue eyes danced and his coarse tow hair bristled in the sun of the late September afternoon. “We ought to clean up on them this year! That one point they won by last time wasn’t so much. What’s wrong with that bunch over there?”

“Nothing: only St. James wants us for football and a Military and Single Combat Tournament for June: same as last year,” continued Johnny; “but Bingo may not let us accept; not for football, anyway. They say he thinks the game is over-emphasized or something!”

“Aw, ballywhizzle!” sneered Porky, who was an optimist, at least when in his football togs. “Bingo’ll accept.”

“But I tell you it’s bad,” persisted Johnny. “We’re all Old House men together; aren’t we? All the real fellows in this school: including Myron Angus, Fred Barclay, Schoharie, you,—and your humble servant who speaketh with thee. Well, then, Fred Barclay as captain of the team is siding with Bingo! All the fellows in that gang over there are not only sore at Bingo, but they’re sore as blazes at Fred! And Myron Angus is sorest of them all!”

Porky Taylor gazed a little more respectfully

into the big blue eyes of his long-drawn-out chum, who stood before him in the cadet gray uniform of the Chatham Military School.

“Maybe you have a mighty dome at that, John,” he chuckled, “but don’t worry; that challenge will be accepted. Bingo Crawford is President of this old Institution; but he knows what’s what.”

“Sure it’ll be accepted,” replied Johnny, “and then the fight’ll be on to see who’ll represent the school in most of the Single Combats. Nobody’ll have a chance but Fred Barclay and Myron Angus. It’ll be between the two of them.”

“There are only three Single Combat events: gymnastics, wrestling, and boxing,” said Porky, his blue eyes shining. “Either one of ’em could win all three against those St. James dubs.”

“Don’t know about that,” returned Johnny, remembering that one decisive point of last year; “their good men are not all dead yet. But I do know that Fred and Myron will both go out for everything against each other; and they’re the only real competitors for next year’s Senior Captaincy, too. It’s going to be no good for Old House or the school, either, if that pair fight like a couple of wildcats.”

As a reply, Porky Taylor stuck out his massive chest and cracked it with his two mighty fists. "Take a swat at that, Johnny!" he chuckled again. "I'd like to go after that Lovering Hall Club crowd and lick 'em up; especially Case, Tibbotts, and Richards A. That would settle things; wouldn't it? They'll be the ones who'll try to egg Fred on against Myron, just to see a scrap started inside Old House. You wait and see what you'll see!"

John Hayes roared. "The athlete has brains!" Then he confided: "Fred is one of the nicest fellows in Chatham, but he sure is susceptible to flattery!" Johnny ran a long red hand through his blond hair.

Once again Porky Taylor chuckled. A prospect of physical combat, with his own sturdy body in the thick of it, was music to his ears.

The two watched closely the warring crowd in front of them.

"Where's Myron?" asked Porky.

"Just went up to put on his football togs for practice," muttered Johnny. "Look at Fred Barclay in there; the big chump, shooting off his face. If he doesn't watch his step, that Lovering Hall bunch will kid him into doing anything on

earth to beat Myron, regardless of Old House or the school!"

Old House, like its rival Lovering Hall, contained nearly thirty members; so both clubs naturally were divided into groups within themselves.

Porky Taylor, or Taylor W, as was his proper designation, and Johnny Hayes were in the fourth form, and therefore had before them two more years of school. Their particular chums were two other fourth-formers: Myron Angus, and a young gentleman named Schoharie, who was the Silent Man of Chatham. These four had endured together many vicissitudes of fortune; hence though as members of Old House with Fred Barclay their loyalty to Fred was great, their loyalty to each other was far greater.

"Aw, rats!" shouted a voice suddenly, in the group of tongue-battlers before them. "You give me a pain!"

Porky and Johnny Hayes started into the crowd; but as they began to elbow their way through, a well-set-up, stocky chap, with an expressionless face, a pale skin, and keen dark eyes, faced them and took them back again to a considerable distance.

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“What’s happened, Sco?” asked Porky quickly.

“Give us the latest, Silent!” demanded Johnny.

Schoharie, the Silent Man of Chatham, acknowledged the greetings with a nod but no words. He promptly locked his hands behind his back; stood with heels tightly together and stared before him until the other two could endure the strain no longer.

“Hey, hey,” commanded Porky, “come across.”

“Yes, Sco, for the love of Mike,” added Johnny.

Then only did Schoharie the Silent speak.

But before his words flow forth, let us explain something of the venerable hall of learning which was attended by these boys. The Chatham Military School was situated two miles north of what was once the village of Chatham, now part of the City of Niagara Falls, on the west side of the Old River Road, which runs between the Falls of Niagara and the town of Lewiston.

The cadet organization was a battalion of infantry, composed of about one hundred and twenty-five officers and men. It was divided into

companies A and B, and a band. The cadet officers, under the Faculty, maintained the discipline of the school, and were of two classes: the commissioned, which included captains and first and second lieutenants, and the non-commissioned, which included the sergeants and corporals. The captain of Company A was known as the Senior Captain, regardless of his form in the school; the captain of Company B in the same way was known as the Junior Captain. The Senior Captaincy was therefore the highest office of the school, and the Junior Captaincy was the next.

The cadet battalion itself was under the command of the school Commandant, Colonel Thomas Jefferson Meadows: "T. J.", as he had been known to all Chatham cadets since the far-off days of Bob Anderson, who fought so hard in "Winning his Shoulder Straps."

At the end of the school year, all non-commissioned officers were appointed by the President and Commandant to fill the vacancies which would occur in the following fall; and, since the Great War, even all commissioned officers were appointed in this manner.

During the particular year of which we are

writing, all the commissioned officers except Fred Barclay, who was the second lieutenant of Company A, were in the sixth form, and so would not return to school the following fall. Fred was in the fifth form; Myron Angus, as has been said, was in the fourth form. Myron was first sergeant of Company A and so next in rank to Fred Barclay.

Fred Barclay was eighteen years old, and because he was captain of the football team, and because of his general ability as a leader, he was one of the most powerful men in Chatham, and under ordinary circumstances, one of the nicest.

Myron Angus was seventeen. He had been at Chatham for four years; had become imbued with its military spirit, and had determined to make his career in the Army. Hence he had announced, rather undiplomatically, possibly, though very honorably, that he purposed to try to do so well in his work that he would be chosen in June for the next year's Senior Captaincy. Likewise, because he was ambitious and courageous it was certain that he would try with all his power to be a Top Man, who would represent the school in as many Single Combat Contests as he could, should the St. James Durham challenge be accepted.

Let us return now to our three cadets near that excited group of Chathamites on the school campus.

“Fred was pussyfooting about Bingo Crawford and football, Porky, when Myron came right out before the whole gang and told Fred he should be ashamed of himself,” said Schoharie the Silent in a monotone and almost inaudibly. “Myron told Fred also that as captain of the team he should stick up for his own game; go to Bingo—tell him we want to take on St. James with football as well as everything else; and that this stuff about over-emphasis is the bunk.” Schoharie the Silent yawned as though bored. “Well, you know, Johnny, the way Fred went back at Myron hot and heavy, all right,” he concluded after a moment.

“I should say yes,” said Johnny.

“I just got into the scrap myself,” went on the Silent Man in his low voice. “I told Fred that his weakness always has been that he tries to curry favor.”

“Whew!” whistled Johnny. “That’s one of those little things that your brainy playmate John H. Hayes here is not going to tell Fred Barclay.”

The two athletic members of the trio merely gave Johnny a scornful glance.

“How do you think it’s going to end, Sco?” asked Porky after a moment.

“That if Myron Angus gets funny with Barclay, he will get the worst licking any man ever got at Chatham,” replied the stony-visaged one.

“Spoken like the strong and silent man you are,” breathed Johnny Hayes with an affected shiver. “And you fellows can worry, too, about St. James Durham, football, Top-Men Contests and next June’s Senior Captaincy, or anything else you like. But me, being a non-athletic guy of wisdom, me, Sco: if I were in your place, or Myron’s, I’d be worrying about Fred Barclay’s mighty fists.”

“Maybe I am,” vouchsafed Schoharie with a momentary though quickly controlled flash in his dark eyes. “Look who is coming up to us now!”



"I TELL YOU NOW I'M GOING TO LICK YOU."—Page 23.

CHAPTER II

FIGHT CLOUDS

"I DIDN'T think you'd do that to me, Sco," said Fred Barclay quickly as he stopped before Schoharie the Silent. "And if you do it again, I tell you now I'm going to lick you."

"Don't wait if you feel that way," replied Schoharie. "Try it this minute."

The Silent Man of Chatham slowly looked the fine athlete before him up and down. Fred Barclay was about five feet ten in height, weighed one hundred and seventy-five pounds, had broad shoulders, an easy carriage, a well-shaped head. And to-day his tight gray cadet blouse with the bronze second lieutenant's knob on each shoulder, set off markedly his deep chest and muscular hands and arms.

"No; we'll let it go that way," replied Fred at length.

"Look here, Fred," put in Porky Taylor suddenly, "we're Old House men, all of us, including Angus. Let's forget it all, and you and Myron make it up; will you?"

Fred Barclay's brown eyes grew wide. "I'm captain of the team, Porky," he answered beligerently, "and you and Sco and Angus are on it. Well, Bingo's still President of this school. And I know what he wants. That's my business. As to Angus: Old House, or no Old House, that fellow is going to behave himself so far as he touches me; or I'll know why!"

"Do you think we'll accept St. James's challenge, Fred?" asked Johnny Hayes in a low voice, and as oil upon raging waters.

"You'll find out probably, if you wait long enough."

With that, Fred Barclay left his friends and started through the pines that skirted the campus toward the main building, which he was seen to enter by the door which led to the President's office.

"Fists," murmured Johnny as Fred disappeared. "Fists with great big knuckles on them."

"Like the bones in your head!" whipped out Porky.

"Righto!" added Schoharie the Silent, as a slight smile flitted across his thin lips.

"There you've got it, lads!" chuckled Porky.

His blue eyes sparkled as he expanded his massive chest and bumped it against the long-drawn-out Johnny, nearly knocking that gentleman over.

"Go easy there. You may think this is a joke," protested Johnny. "But it isn't."

"What is it? Gloom and murder?" demanded Porky in glee and danced a yard or two backward.

"I'm going up and get into my football clothes," put in Schoharie. "See you at practice in a few minutes, Porky."

"I'm going right up to see Myron," announced Johnny Hayes with determination as the Silent Man left them. "Fred Barclay makes me sick."

"Fred's like a bear with a sore nose," chuckled Porky as they started off together. "Looks like real business, though, before we're through!"

"Oh, Angus! Oh, Myron Angus!" bawled Johnny and Porky as they reached the main building of the school, their heads turned upward to a window on the third floor. "Oh, Angus!"

No answer.

"He's probably putting on squeaky shoes and can't hear," pronounced Porky.

The building before which they stood a moment was of gray stone, with its ancient walls ivy-covered up to its mansard roof. To the left of it was a wing, known as Downing Hall, in which, on the lower floor, was the Armory, and on the upper floor were boys' sleeping-rooms. Beyond, and connected to Downing Hall, was the Chapel building, which held on the second floor the Chapel and on the ground floor the School Room, the Piety recitation-room of Old Hank, (Mr. Hankey, more correctly,) "Church" Bell's English room, and the Commandant's abattoir for protesting students of mathematics.

Myron Angus was in charge of Dormitory H on the third floor of the main building; and his alcove on the corner overlooked by an east window the Gym and campus, and by a south window the drive directly below and the deep pine-skirted lawn beyond the drive.

Porky Taylor and Johnny Hayes wasted no time on that wide drive before the main building. "Myron isn't going to answer," concluded the latter as Porky and he peered up at their friend's south window. "Come on up."

The two ran down the walk and around the corner of the main building; entered the school

through the Armory doorway; hopped up the three flights of stairs, two steps at a time, and hurried into Dormitory H.

“Angus! Oh, Angus!” they continued to call.

A smiling, black-haired, black-eyed boy, with high cheek-bones, a rather low forehead, and full lips, suddenly appeared in the doorway of the alcove at the far end of the Dormitory. “Hello, you two,” he exclaimed laughingly, his red cheeks aglow. “Great Scott, you’re yowling loud enough to drown out the Falls!”

The three entered an alcove, about ten feet long by six feet wide, with a window on the right and a window at the end. The walls were of wood painted gray, and they extended to within three feet of the ceiling. A small built-in closet with two drawers was directly opposite the doorway and next to the east window. A narrow military iron cot, which stood at the left of the doorway, and one chair completed the furniture. Pictures of last year’s football team, of Myron’s sister Peggy, of General Pershing, and of Sue Carroll made up the decorations.

It was in this very alcove, tradition ran, that Old House had been founded years before by the Big Five; and actually Old House was known a

long time as the Fivers' Club, until the name was considered ridiculous for a Club which always contained more than twenty members; and so the Fivers had changed their name to Old House.

"All out, football practice!" came from the drive.

Myron Angus grinned as he pulled on his sweat-shirt. "Got to hustle. Was just in 'Church' Bell's room trying to borrow an English book."

Myron was a well-put-together lad. He was five feet, nine and three-quarters inches tall; weighed one hundred and sixty-five pounds; he had a deep chest which tapered into a thin waist; his hips were fairly light, and he possessed strong, well-modeled legs. But the great breadth of his shoulders and his powerful arms and hands with long black hair on them were what struck most fellows so forcibly, and proclaimed Myron to be the splendid athlete that he was. In truth, he was a fine gymnast; a first-rate wrestler and boxer; a good right end.

Because he was also square and plucky, he was as popular as any man in school. The boys always looked up to him in admiration. His face

was quite heavily bearded, and blue showed distinctly under his skin, even when closely shaven.

"Boy," began Porky, "old John H. Hayes here and I think you are in it, up to your necktie—unless you take a tumble to yourself."

"The first point is, Myron," broke in Johnny: "Do you think the St. James challenge will be accepted?"

"Sure I do," replied Myron with an inquiring look at both of his chums. "What do you fellows think?"

Johnny and Porky said that they thought so, too.

"Then if you keep on fighting with Fred," continued Porky, "you'll knock your chances for the Senior Captaincy next June into a cocked hat, or my name's not Taylor."

And Johnny broke in by telling Myron of what Fred had said to them on the campus. "You and Fred ought to be careful, Myron. Porky and I both think that the Lovering Hall fellows, such as George Case, Tibbotts, and that crowd, will line up with Fred to beat you in anything you try, just to make trouble in Old House."

Myron laughed; threw a sweater across his shoulders and tugged at the belt of his football

trousers. Lovering Hall with its thirty members was no mean opponent!

"Maybe the Durham challenge won't be accepted, anyway," he replied. "Then that would end that."

"Won't be accepted?" declaimed Johnny. "Listen to those ginks down there now!"

Mingled with the cries of "All out, football practice!" could be heard the low murmur of the angry mob.

"They've come back from the campus," explained Johnny, "and are in front of Bingo's office this minute."

Myron's countenance lighted up as he put his hand on Johnny's shoulder. "Suppose the challenge is accepted, old fellow?" he smiled. "What harm will it do? I think it would be the best thing in the world for the school. We'd all get together then and lick the daylights out of Durham. And Johnny, don't worry. Nobody is going to pull any mean stuff. The men here are too good for that. If I win in anything, I win; and if I lose, I lose; it'll all be part of the game."

But Johnny Hayes was dubious. Porky, however, with his mighty fist, poked Myron in the chest. "Come on," he exclaimed playfully; "let's

shove the noses of the old scrub team into a couple of tons of mud this afternoon, and get ready for the battles of the season!"

"Fred is one of the finest men who ever lived," declared Myron as a few minutes later the three moved through the crowd in front of the main building and on out to the football field. "He's just hot under the collar now, but he doesn't mean half he says."

"Try some passing, Angus, please."

"Right there," answered Myron.

It was Fred Barclay, the captain of the team, who had called.

"That guy Angus is such a blamed good fellow, he's an easy mark," commented Johnny as Myron left.

"Oh, he's no barnyard dove for a hen hawk to gobble," returned Porky. "Get that out of your head, John. So long! I'm going to get into that practice, too."

And Johnny cogitated gloomily while from the side lines during a long hour he watched the scrub swallow its "couple of tons of mud" for the benefit of "The Team" and the glory of the school.

"To-morrow at four, men!" cried out Fred

Barclay as the practice ended. "Montgomery will be here to coach us."

As the perspiring players moved off the field toward the school and showers, Fred Barclay and Myron remained alone together near the goal-posts.

"I thought I ought to tell you, Angus, before the others know it, because we're Old House men together and had that row this afternoon, Bingo Crawford has accepted the St. James challenge. But he wants the school to quit football."

"Accepted St. James's challenge, and he cuts out football after that challenge has been received?" exclaimed Myron Angus as he gazed into the big brown eyes of the man in front of him.

"I didn't say that!" replied Barclay. "I said that Bingo wants the school to quit football; he hasn't ordered it yet."

"Oh, I see," said Myron.

"But I think he's right just the same, as I told you before," continued Fred. "Didn't we have a fellow nearly killed last year? I guess if you'd been lying on your back all winter with your spine out of gear like old Tim Masters, you'd think differently."

Myron Angus made no answer to the arguments; instead he asked in a friendly tone: "If football is to be stopped, Fred, why is Montgomery coming to coach us?"

"You're too fresh," snapped Fred as he stepped closer to Myron and colored darkly. "You're openly out for the Senior Captaincy; and they say to-day you're openly going out to beat me in everything in the Top-Men Contest." Fred paused and drew a deep breath as though the better to keep control of himself.

"Is either of those ambitions a crime, Fred?" inquired Myron without flinching. "Whatever I get, I only want straight."

"If that's the way you look at it then," answered Fred, "you've cast the die. And you've got to lick me, young fellow, right through the Contest. Do you understand that? And that goes for winning the Senior Captaincy, too!"

"I don't mind trying either in the least," replied Myron honestly. "I don't like a row with you, though, Fred. After all, it's all only fair competition. If you whip me in everything, that'll be all right. But I'm going to give you the best run I know how."

Fred Barclay's lips closed tightly in anger.

“Well, it’s not likely we’ll have any one else against us, anyway!” he declared. “And so far as I go, the fight’ll be fair. The poorer man takes his licking; and it’ll be a good one. That suits you; doesn’t it?”

“It does,” answered Myron Angus firmly. “But we don’t want to forget, either, that our main object is to beat Durham; not each other.”

“I won’t, Holy.”

“Nor I,” answered Myron Angus, his own color now rising swiftly from neck to face.

CHAPTER III

A MESS-HALL BULLY

“PORKY, when my dad decided to send me to Chatham he said to me: ‘John, you’re such a fine military-looking chap and have such a soldierly bearing that you’d do credit to any army’; but he didn’t tell me a thing about all this work to clean up St. James Durham in this blinking old Military Tournament. No, no, not papa!” John H. Hayes mopped his wet, hot brow; threw off his cadet blouse; and flopped on to the cot in his alcove.

It was three days after the encounter between Fred Barclay and Myron Angus. No formal announcement yet had been made of the acceptance of the St. James challenge; but John H. Hayes had noticed that no football practice had been called that afternoon and that the battalion drill on the campus had been unusually heavy, even for a Monday.

“An eight-pound rifle, sonny, carried for two hours on one’s youthful shoulders is no picnic!” he went on.

"No muscle, no brains, either," mocked Porky.

"No strength I suppose, too," responded Johnny. "Don't you know that the strongest guys in the world are divided into two classes, Porky: those with muscle, and those without?"

"I suppose you're one of the kind without it," grinned Porky.

"Sure I am. And I'll tell you something else," continued John without blushing. "I feel sorry for any fellow who has to work with his uncouth hands the way Fred and old Myron Angus will have to just to be a Top Man for the honor of the school in those Single Combat Contests. And to be Senior Captain! Think: drills and drills and drills; can't get caught smoking; got to study all the time; got to do everything right. '*Non pour moi!*', as they say in gay Paree. This competitive spirit is all left out of your little Johnny. What is this big life for, anyway?"

"What is it for?" asked Porky who was now beginning to think he'd stood about all that was necessary.

"Ah, that's it! It's for the intellectual arts, you bonehead," quoth Johnny sagely. "Arts that are gifts, me lad; no blinking work required. Arts like acting and singing as thus." Johnny

opened his big mouth wide and therefrom came forth on an ascending scale: "Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si, Do!" And on a descending one: "Do, Si, La, Sol, Fa, Mi, Re, Do! Do! ho! ho! ho!"

Bing! Johnny dodged a book.

"Get up off that bed, you singing chromo!" thundered Porky.

But Johnny remained prostrate, his twinkling eyes watchful. "Say, Pork, how'd you get your name, anyway? Short for Porcupine? Was it on account of your bristly tow hair which sticks up on your bean like quills on that fretful animal?"

"Get up off that bed!" again roared the Porcupine, as fiendish glee shone in his little blue eyes. "Get up before thou diest where thou liest like the dog thou art!" And Porky Taylor, with chest expanded and arms out began to dance in front of Johnny so that when that worthy did get up there would be no escape.

Johnny now arose quickly as the better part of safety. "Mercy! Mercy! Mercy!" he laughed.

"Mercy your eye!" chortled Porky. Then he butted Johnny with his mighty chest; and butted him again and again, roaring and prancing be-

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fore him until he cornered poor Johnny and drove his back against the alcove wall. "Make obeisance!" he commanded, and entangled the fingers of both his wicked hands in Johnny's long blond hair. "Make obeisance! And say: 'Porky, I'm sorry; and I'll never insult Porky so cruelly again!' Say it, you dumb-bell!" And Porky yanked at Johnny's hair: "Say it!"

Whereat the helpless Johnny, perforce, repeated midst laughter and protests: "Porky, I'm sorry; and I'll never insult you so cruelly again—you dumb-bell!"

"You what?" yelled Porky, and yanked harder at Johnny's hair.

"That's what you said I should say!" came back the redoubtable Johnny from under Porky's paws.

"I did, eh? Take it back!"

"I take it back, Porcupine," repeated the now weakening Johnny H.

"No Porcupine, either: just Porky!"

"All right: Porky," agreed Johnny.

"And admit further," demanded Porky, "that you are within me mighty power; and that your brains are as weak as your brawn! Admit it, I say!"

John H. Hayes was forced to admit all, to the great delectation of his chum.

Just then the bugler blew "first call" for supper!

"Whew!" Johnny and Porky started to wash up. "And all for Honor's sake!" the former gasped out as an ending shot.

The schedule of business at Chatham was much as at other Military Schools: "reveille" by the bugler roused the cadets at seven A. M.; "first call" and later "assembly" took them into breakfast by seven-thirty; Chapel was at eight; classes and study from nine o'clock until one; then dinner; and in the afternoon was drill, either in the Manual of Arms or company, and battalion drill, or any, or all three. In fine weather, the military instructions took place on the campus; in bad weather, in the Armory on the first floor of Downing Hall. Drill generally lasted about one hour; then, until supper, came sports.

But to-day, as has been seen, drill had lasted well throughout the afternoon. Shortly after the "first call" for supper the bugler sounded "assembly."

As the cadets jumped into their places in

double-rank formation on the Armory floor preparatory to the march into the Mess Hall, Colonel Thomas Jefferson Meadows, the school Commandant, stepped before the line: "Men, as you doubtless all have heard," said he, "the St. James challenge has been accepted. I was glad to see that this battalion stood the gaff so well to-day. It was a long, tough drill. I congratulate you. It makes me sure that when we get to the real business of preparation for Durham next spring, we shall win hands down." T. J. paused and smiled as he looked up and down the line, meanwhile running a hand over his shining bald head.

"The events, men, will be as follows: football this fall—tentatively. You have all heard rumors about the abolition of the game. I can say to you, however, that as yet nothing has been fully decided; and that meantime we shall carry on; and that the game with St. James Durham has been scheduled for the Saturday before Thanksgiving, November twenty-fourth."

A restless movement swept through the line accompanied by a few slight murmurs.

"Order!" called out the cadet officers. "Order there!"

Instantly there was rigidity again, and absolute silence.

“Captains, bring your men to ‘Rest,’ please,” said the Commandant.

“Company A,” called out Cadet Captain Atkins W, “Rest!”

“Company B,” cried Cadet Captain Varick W, “Rest!”

“Band,” yelled Band Leader and Drum Major Hertzog, “Rest!”

With this order each cadet was permitted to speak and to assume any standing position of comfort he wished, so long as he kept his right foot in line. All heads turned toward T. J.

“Football will be considered a separate part of the competition,” continued the Commandant. Again he paused, but went on in a moment, “Here’s hoping we win, too!”

“The balance of the Tournament of course will be held next June. The date is Saturday, June first. Each event will count one point; and the events will be:

A Guard Mount.

A Platoon Drill.

A Drill in the Manual of Arms
by a picked Squad.

A Review.

And the Single Combats which will be as you know : gymnastics, wrestling, and boxing.

“ The whole school, of course, will compete in the battalion drills ; I shall choose before June which of our four platoons is best to represent the school in the platoon drill ; likewise before June a star Squad will be picked for the Manual of Arms drill.

“ The men to represent the school in the Single Combats will be chosen in the Top-Men Contest, Tuesday, May twenty-eighth.

“ These Single-Combat fellows will need much practice and training throughout the winter. Hence in order that the coach may know upon whom to count, those who desire to take part in the Top-Men Contest for the honor of the school will now kindly step one pace to the front.” T. J. again looked over his men ; and his genial countenance was alight with confidence in them.

Again there was a murmur throughout the line which this time, of course, the officers did not suppress. All now saw Cadet First Sergeant Myron Angus and Cadet Second Lieutenant Fred Barclay step forward. And then : “ I’m going out for it, too,” thought Porky suddenly. And the Porcupine, his tow head bristling, moved a

pace to the front; then Richards A, with red cheeks a-glisten and black hair smoothed and parted in the middle, went forward; to represent Lovering Hall, at least, so doubtless he thought.

“Phew!” from all sides, and grins: fun in the future easily could be seen. But the startling event now occurred: A fifth man, a pimply, overgrown, fleshy lad of about fourteen with a red head and a very frightened face moved out of the formation haltingly and stood in line with the other four.

“Look at that!” exclaimed Corporal Schoharie the Silent under his breath to Second Sergeant George Case. “That’s that new kid, Jones!”

“Sure,” chuckled Case. “Hop-and-go-fetch-it Cyril Jones. We told him to do that; he’s nutty.”

“Do you think you’d better go in for this, my lad?” the Commandant said in a low kindly voice as he stepped up to Jones. “You’ve been in school only twelve days! I don’t think you understand; do you?”

No one save Jones could hear T. J.’s words; but Cyril Jones was blushing furiously; and his stuttering answer rang down the line for all cadets to hear. “They—they—they—they told

me I ought to do it, s-sir! It was f-f-f-for the h-h-honor of the sc-sch-school, s-sir."

"That's all right, old fellow," comforted Colonel Meadows, understandingly. "Remain right where you are. We'll look into this later."

Titters, laughter, guffaws now were heard on all sides.

"Battalion!—Attention!" commanded T. J.

On the instant there was silence and the clicking of heels.

In the Mess Hall (which is the military name for dining-room) were many long dining-tables. They were presided over at either end by masters or officers, commissioned or non-commissioned.

First Sergeant Myron Angus commanded a table at the kitchen end of the Mess Hall. Second Sergeant Porky Taylor was not in charge of any table; and he and Private Johnny Hayes respectively had places on Myron's right and left. Fred Barclay and Schoharie the Silent sat at the opposite end of the room. Second Sergeant George Case watched over the other end of Myron's table. Two of Case's Lovering Hall chums, Corporal Richards A and Corporal Tibbotts, sat near George; also close to him was a new cadet, a youngster of eleven named Thomas

Hiller—a bespectacled, scared-looking little boy with black hair.

It was Case's business to preserve order and decorum at his table end; for Myron Angus, though in command, was too far off to be able to know all that might be going on.

But George Case was no respecter of the Sergeant's chevrons he wore. He had obtained them, at least so most Old House men thought, merely because he was fifteen; was in the fourth form; had been at Chatham three years; and possessed the gall of an army mule.

"Say, new kid," he whispered to young Hiller, his big gray eyes gleaming, the moment all had sat down for supper, "do you know what that new kid Jones is going to get to-night for what he just did?"

"No," replied little Hiller.

"Sir!" spat back Case.

"No, sir," whimpered little Hiller.

"Well, he's going to get the blamedest loosening any new kid ever got. He tattled, I think, to T. J.! Booh!" George Case blew bullishly at the small boy. George was a tall, rawboned fellow with thin red wrists and light hair. And he, too, had pimples on his face; which he now

began to scratch with his right hand as he took up a slice of bread with his left and shoved a large piece into his mouth.

Little Thomas Hiller shivered in fright.

“You’d better get scared, Hiller,” offered Case; then he addressed himself to Tibbotts at his right. “What’s that we hear about this young new kid, Jim?”

“Oh, you mean about the fourteen buckets of blood, George? Ha!”

“Sure; and about the lead slugs! Didn’t you hear about them, too, Richards?” George winked at Richards A.

“We’ve got a counterfeiter in our midst, I heard,” returned Richards A, awesomely.

“Fourteen buckets of blood!” chanted the three older boys in low unison.

Little Hiller sat stiff; his eyes stared through his spectacles; his hands lay flat in his lap under the table; his supper was untouched; his face hot. He did not dare look to the right or left. He thought of his father, and wondered why he was in this terrible place; he wanted to run home—home.

“Counterfeiter!” crackled Case without mercy. “We heard all about it, new kid! Mak-

ing lead slugs before you came here; and dropping 'em into slot-machines for gum and chocolate! Fourteen buckets of blood! And the drug-store man will get you if you don't watch out! Counterfeiter!"

"Haw! Haw!" laughed Richards A and Tibbotts.

"What you got to say for yourself?" persisted Case.

"N-nothing, sir." And little Hiller by a great effort turned his head in the direction of his tormentor; but there it stuck; he couldn't turn it back to save his life; and, crimson-cheeked, he stared blankly through his spectacles at George Case—until that gentleman with a leer declared: "We'll attend to your matter to-night when we look after Hop-and-go-fetch-it Jones. Counterfeiter! Eat! Eat! I command thee!"

"Fourteen buckets of blood!" intoned the three once more. But their food called them. They dived into their own suppers; and, thus relieved, the eleven-year-old new boy was finally able to turn his head and eyes back toward his own plate. He remained in this position scarcely touching his food, until chairs throughout the room scraped upon the bare floor. The cadets

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arose. And their parting grace meant to Hiller only that his ordeal, for the time, at least, was over.

A few moments later the battalion was dismissed in the Armory.

"Why don't you take a guy your size, George?" asked a fat boy who had sat three chairs down the table from Case.

"What business is it of yours?" demanded Case.

"I'm asking just the same," replied the fat boy.

"Say, Williams, if you don't want to get hurt, keep out of things you don't know about," came back George.

Myron, Porky, and Johnny Hayes were standing near the rifle-racks.

"You and I, Porky, will try a lot more passing and receiving to-morrow afternoon and see if we can't get them down better," Myron was saying, when suddenly he spied Fatty Williams and Case. "Fat, just a sec when you're through," he called. "You've a good nerve," he said in a low tone as Fatty reached him. "I think I know what was just happening; and what was going on at your end of the table to boot.

I wasn't sure of a lot of things during Mess. But it was all pretty bad, I suppose; wasn't it?"

"Talk to Case, Myron, please," answered Fatty.

"That's right," laughed Myron. "Hang that Case, anyway. F. Malcolm Williams," he continued with a smile. "What does F. stand for anyway? Fat or Freckles?"

"For 'Fat'—you gook, Myron," broke in Porky explosively.

"For 'Fresh,'" put in Johnny Hayes with his eyes on the ceiling; which brought Johnny a smart blow across the shoulders from Fat.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW CADET'S STORY

"HEY, Porky, get up quick!" whispered Johnny Hayes about an hour after "taps" had been blown that night. All cadets were supposed to be in bed and lights out at "taps," which was sounded at nine-thirty, except sixth-formers who could remain up until ten. "Get up, I tell you!" Johnny, in his pajamas, had tiptoed out of his alcove and gone into Porky's.

"What's trouble?" demanded Porky sleepily. "Can't you see I'm resting to get ready to trim up those hot athletes a couple of years from now?"

"Get up!" repeated Johnny. "There's a loosening going on down in Dormitory D. You may never live to see another if Fred and Myron ever get hold of you in that Top-Men Contest, or Richards A, either."

"More nerve than you had, though," returned Porky as he slowly sat up.

"Case and that crowd are loosening old Hop-

and-go-fetch-it down in D," Johnny ran on, as he poked Porky in the ribs and shook his shoulder.

That made things different. Porky now jumped out of bed quickly. Down the hall from their own Dormitory E they stealthily fled: to the stairs at the doorway of Dormitory H; thence to the floor below; and to the left into Dormitory D.

"Leave me alone! Leave me alone, I tell you!" a strident, queer voice was shrieking. "Leave me a-alone! Leave me ——"

"Shut up!" The sound of a hand cracked across a mouth greeted Johnny and Porky as they reached Cyril Jones's alcove.

"Oh! Oh!" It was a treble yell of terror now. "Save me! Save me—please!"

A red-headed boy, flat on his bed with Case standing over him, appealed to the newcomers wildly for help, with arms outstretched.

"You say another word and I'll kill you!" shot out Case.

A dozen boys were crowded in back of Case.

"Help!" screamed Jones. "Help! Help!"

"Beat it, fellows! Here comes some one!" Jim Tibbotts' warning from the doorway in the hall came none too soon.

All fled in every direction: some scrambled under beds in the different alcoves throughout the dormitory; others took a chance and bolted through the doorway and down the hall to their own abodes.

Porky and Johnny were of those who ran pell-mell for their own alcoves. "Fred's Officer of the Day, and Myron's acting Sergeant of the Guard," Porky murmured as they reached home safely.

"We just beat 'em to it," quoth Johnny. "Wonder how we missed 'em."

"They must have been looking at the moon," said Porky.

But back in Dormitory D now was consternation; the Officer of the Day and the Sergeant of the Guard were at the dormitory entrance; Myron Angus, acting temporarily as Sergeant of the Guard, switched on the light in the doorway and let his superior officer precede him into the dormitory.

"What's the trouble, Jones?" asked Barclay as he came to the new boy's bedside. "Nightmare?"

"Y-Y-Yes sir. That was it."

"Well, go to sleep; and don't yell like that any more. Anybody awake in this dormitory?"

Not a sound answered him.

"Sergeant Angus, go across the hall and see if Sergeant Case and Corporal Tibbotts are in their bunks. I'll inspect these alcoves."

"Yes, sir." Myron saluted; and went immediately upon the duty assigned, while Fred poked his head into one alcove after the other in a quick, perfunctory manner.

"Case and Tibbotts there all right?" inquired Fred as Myron returned.

"Yes, sir."

"Asleep?"

"That was their appearance, sir."

"Everything seems to be quiet here. Not a sound and every one in his own bed. So it appears, anyway."

Together the two walked out of the dormitory and into the hall.

"I guess that new guy must be nutty all right," Fred commented, "having a nightmare like that!"

Myron stopped and faced Fred. "You know better than that," he said quietly. "And it isn't right for us fellows who are non-coms and commissioned officers to stand for such bullying as that in this school."

"What do you mean?" demanded Fred, his color rising.

Both were in full uniform with cadet caps on: Myron in white gloves and with white, brass-buckled cartridge-belt tight around his waist; and Fred white-gloved likewise, but with a dark commissioned officer's belt about him, from which hung a gleaming commissioned officer's sabre. Each realized fully, as now they gazed at each other, that they were on important military duty in the preservation of the discipline and even the spirit of the corps.

"I mean, Fred," answered Myron, "that you know as well as I Jones had no more nightmare than you had; and that Case is at the bottom of this—I could almost swear I heard his voice—and he's a sergeant at that."

"I don't know any such thing," replied Barclay.

"Oh, come off, Fred."

"Well, suppose I do suspect then; we didn't see him; did we? An officer can't know a thing like that unless he sees the man; can he? Besides a little loosening doesn't hurt any new kid."

"I understand that all right," returned Myron stoutly; "but this is different."

"I'm Officer of the Day, not you," declared Fred with affected ease. "And I'm in charge of these floors all night. I saw nothing; and you only think you heard Case. We report no man on evidence of that kind."

Myron felt chilled to his heart as they went up the stairs to the third floor on which both Fred and he lived; for Myron knew that according to the code of the corps Fred was right. And Myron believed in that code. Yet somehow he could not make it operate satisfactorily to-night. Bullying was rotten; hazing was different. Myron easily could distinguish between the two. He wondered how such a nervous lad as Jones ever had managed to get into the school anyway.

At the top of the stairs a door of a master's room opened. "What's the trouble, gentlemen?" inquired the genial Commandant, a slight sign of anxiety in his wide blue eyes. "I thought I heard a noise."

"Young Jones down-stairs was yelling in his sleep—at least so he said, sir," answered Barclay.

"Are you—you sure that was all, Lieutenant?"

Fred shrugged his shoulders. "Neither the

Sergeant nor I could put our hands on anything else, sir."

"That boy Jones has no business here," commented the Commandant as he rubbed his chin. "He has a real nervous affliction. He got here through a misunderstanding. I shall speak again to Colonel Crawford."

Hence neither Myron nor the school was concerned long about Cyril Jones or the bullying of him; for within twenty-four hours Jones's parents had called for him and taken him home.

"I suppose, Myron, you'll be blaming me for that," said Fred as the boy was motored off.

"Let's drop the subject," replied Myron.

"Certainly," returned Fred; and walked away.

At football practice that afternoon a terrible calamity occurred, which for the day at least turned the minds of all Chathamites from every other subject.

Fred Barclay, Myron, Porky, Schoharie, Richards A, the whole team, were playing a hard, fast practice against the scrub. The first half was over.

"We've got to beat Niagara High, and we've got to beat Graylock," Monty, the coach, declared to the team, "if we're to have a look-in with

St. James at the end of the season. Isn't that right, Fred? "

"You bet it is, Monty."

"Then go after the scrub this half, fellows; clean 'em up—just as if they were your worst enemies."

Some of the scrub team who were listening smiled rather grimly at this. Fatty Williams in particular didn't think so much of Monty's words. But Fatty, like a good scrub-team sacrifice, kept his thoughts to himself and determined to sell his own slaughter as dearly as possible.

"That was a fine catch of Porky's pass you made, Myron, in that second quarter," said Fred with a frank smile. "I want you to know, too, that I think it was."

"Thanks, Freddy," Myron smiled back. "I understand."

"Look here, Hertzog, please," called the team captain as he turned from the right end of the team to the left end. "I'm going to have Richards A from left half pass you one this quarter. See if you can grab it and get through the entire scrub for a touch-down; will you, Hertzzy, boy? "

“You bet I will,” replied Hertzog, his dark oriental face lighting up.

And three minutes after the second half had started Richards A passed a beautiful one. Hertzog caught it; was down the field like a rocket. In a moment no one was between him and the goal line save Fatty Williams, the full-back of the scrub team. Hertzog dodged; Fatty dived. Crash! They hit the ground together from a magnificent tackle.

“A-aay! Yow!” yelled the side lines. “Fine tackle, Fat! Fine run, Hertzy!”

Fat untangled himself slowly; then arose and stood looking down upon the man on the ground. But Hertzog didn't get up.

“What's that?”

Suddenly Monty rushed from the side lines followed by a boy with a water-pail and a towel; and a dozen others after him. The two teams crowded around the player on the ground. Hertzog lay still, his body curled about the ball. Then his teammates picked him up and carried him into the Infirmary.

“A slight concussion,” the doctor reported forty-five minutes later. “He'll get over that quickly enough, and so far as that is concerned,

he'll be all right to-morrow. But he also has a nasty broken shoulder."

Only the next day did the school draw a breath of ease. For Hertzog then was propped up in bed, grinning and receiving the plaudits and sympathy of the many who were permitted to have a look at him, and say hello.

"I'm glad old Hertzy is O. K. again," pronounced Johnny right after dinner as he stood with his chums on the cement walk which runs in front of the main building. "He's a fine, fine guy. But I guess that puts the quietus on football, all right."

"Oh, I don't know," replied Schoharie the Silent.

"No; of course it won't," offered the optimistic Porky.

"Well, I suppose Fred'll be satisfied now if Bingo does call it off!" continued Johnny.

"Don't talk that way, Johnny," counseled Myron, "or people'll think you're crazier than you are! Of course Fred won't feel like that."

"Just the same, he's been toadying to Bingo; and I hope you beat his head off in the Top-Men fight and for the Senior Captaincy, too," came back Johnny undisturbed. "This Porky here

and Richards A will be out of that Top-Men business in jig time, anyway."

But no one spoke; for as Johnny finished, George Case came up to the group from around a corner of the building; and every man was fully aware that George had heard each word of Johnny's last remark.

Porky eyed Johnny with view to immediate murder; but he did nothing.

"I feel sorry for poor old Fatty Williams, too; don't you fellows?" began George as he thus gave himself away. "Just saw him coming out of the Infirmary. Looked as if he'd lost all his rich uncles or something."

The Old House men silently nodded their agreement with George.

At this moment the little new cadet, Hiller, chanced to go by, his frightened face averted from the crowd of older boys. Case turned his head toward him. "Counterfeiter! Fourteen buckets of blood!" he shot out; then turned back laughing to the Old House men.

All watched Hiller break into a run and flee in the direction of the Gym.

"Walk down the drive with me a bit; will you, George?" asked Myron. "I've been going to

talk to you about that supper-table thing night before last," he began as they left the crowd. "You've got to cut that kind of business out. It won't do, George."

"But hazing is a tradition in this school," protested Case.

"Hazing and bullying are two different things," replied Myron. "You know that well enough: one is fun; the other is picking on a kid who is scared to death."

"But I don't see why you should interfere with school tradition," persisted George flushing.

"Oh, forget it," answered Myron. "That kid is a puny little beggar, too frightened to live, almost. You've got to cut out bothering him, at the table, anyway."

"You're in command there, Myron," came back Case with self-pity. "I suppose I'll have to cut it out there."

"Yes and you'd better cut it out elsewhere, too, George; he's too small for you."

George Case, with face very red, left Myron Angus; and as he thought over Myron's words, he grew angrier and angrier; for at last it had sunk home that Myron practically had accused him of cowardice.

Immediately after supper that night Myron met little Hiller in the library doorway right under the school's old clock, with its sign, *Carpe Diem*, on it, which had ticked off the hours since the years of our fathers. "Were things any better at the table to-night, Hiller?" Myron asked.

"Yes, sir."

"What's all this lead-slug thing about, anyway, Hiller? Did you do what those fellows say before you came to school? If you did, it's all past; so forget it. Things'll be all right soon."

Little Hiller gazed a moment at Myron without speaking; then he told his lie: "No, sir," he answered, his voice trembling. "I didn't do any of those things; honest I didn't."

"That's good," responded Myron, and put his arm over the boy's shoulder. "I think we can see that you won't have any more trouble. There'll be no doubt about that."

And at the same moment, in the doorway of the School Room, Fred Barclay and George Case held converse: "Are we going to lose football, Fred?"

"I don't know," replied Barclay with anxiety.

"I hope not—for your sake."

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Fred's face was dark as he listened. "That's more than a lot of my so-called friends hope, I guess," he answered.

"I know. I talked with 'em. And I don't care, Fred, if Angus does belong to your Club. You've broken the ice just now. He makes me sick; and I'd just as soon tell him so to his face."

Fred's head was turned away; he made no reply, but his thoughts were turbulent: he feared terribly that Bingo would end football now; and that the school would blame the captain of the team; he regretted every word he had said in support of Bingo.

The bugler was blowing "first call" for study-hour. Fred and George immediately separated. Yes, even his own friends, Fred thought on, were all against him. He could see that, all right. And Angus—Fred let his jaws tighten in anger—most of the Old House men, especially Angus!—So it had come about at last that even the Lovering Hall fellows knew what a rotten deal Angus and Old House men were handing out.

Porky and Schoharie had been watching Fred and Case from a distance.

"Things are fixed now, I'm afraid," Porky whispered, as Case and Barclay parted.

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“I shouldn’t be surprised,” answered the Silent Man, with conviction. “It’s too bad.”

And Johnny Hayes, too, was more filled with sorrow that night than he ever had been before.

CHAPTER V

JOHN H. HAYES TURNS ACTOR

“RIDE him on a rail! Ride him on a rail!” shrieked John H. Hayes with glee immediately after dinner two days later. It was Thursday, which, instead of Saturday, was the school’s weekly holiday; the day when every cadet private who had incurred demerits during the previous week “walked beat” with a rifle on his shoulder on the drive in front of the main building.

Johnny had done two hours and a half of “beat” that morning, and was feeling fairly sprightly because it was over. So now he had purloined a long clothes-pole from the “enclosure” in the rear of the school, and had gone on a hunt for victims. As he spied Fatty Williams he leaped behind him and ran the pole between that gentleman’s legs. “Ride him on a rail!” he yelled.

Schoharie the Silent, Jim Tibbotts, and Porky Taylor instantly came to Johnny’s aid. And Fatty was jerked off the ground, legs dangling,

hands clinging for dear life to the pole, with his body bent nearly double.

"Hey! That's a mean advantage!" yelled Fatty.

"Yow! Wow!" came back the others.

"Hang on, Fat!" derided some spectators.

"Soak it to him, boys!" laughed others.

Out on to the lawn in front of the drive Fat was carried, bouncing, tossing, his freckled face red and worried, his thick light hair blowing in the breeze.

"He ate too much dinner, anyway!" cried Porky gaily. "Let's bang him on the grass!"

"Go easy! Quit it, please!" begged Fatty.

But they heaved him high and mightily and tossed him off the rail to land in a heap on the ground.

"You long-gear'd mutt, John!" quoth Fat as he picked himself up. "Let me get my mitts on you!"

But John H. Hayes had no such idea. He scooted toward the Armory, laughing back defiance and triumph.

And Fatty, after a short effort, gave up the chase. "Watch me even up with that John H. Hayes," he chuckled determinedly as he returned

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to the others. "And with you guys, too! Come on, Sco," he grinned and picked up the pole. "Let's ride somebody else!"

Fat looked around him with blood in his eye. "Oh, baby, there's Case," he murmured suddenly. In swift, though gingerly taken steps, Fat was behind George. "Ride him on a rail!" he shrieked.

In that instant the pole was between Case's legs; Schoharie the Silent had the other end of it; and George, struggling and helpless, was ridden out to the middle of the lawn; and, to the great happiness of all around, was bounced high and long; then dumped in proper ignominy to the ground.

By which it can be seen that Chatham was back to normal again. Nothing further had been heard from Bingo about the abolition of football; Hertzog was safely on the road to recovery and soon could be about again and at least be able to blow his cheeks full and his lungs empty on his big bass horn in the cadet band. Also Old House and John Hayes, too, it would seem, had forgotten sorrows for the time being; though recitations and drill of course continued as regularly as daylight.

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Nevertheless there were rumors; yes, and great ones, too: rumors of excited Faculty meetings wherein T. J. and Old Hank, the Piety master, defended football; rumors of a special trustees' meeting which had been called for a very secret purpose.

Yet the days went on, and finally Saturday came; and with it the Niagara High game.

"Pooh!" concluded Johnny, "nothing's going to happen!"

"Who says there is?" demanded Porky. "You're always thinking things."

"I'm thinking Fatty's going to be an Old House man soon, or my name's not Hayes," said Johnny. "He's no sort of a guy to be a neutral."

"Of course he isn't," laughed Porky. "We'll get him in. Did you know he's going to play in Hertzy's place this afternoon?"

"No; is he?"

"Sure he is. If you'd keep your ears open instead of your mouth, Jawn, you might find out a few things!" Porky took a butt with his shoulder at John H. Hayes.

The game with Niagara High proved a good one. Chatham was victorious 13 to 6. Both teams played well.

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"We'll trim up Graylock next week; then watch us!" yelled Johnny to Myron, as the latter came out of the shower.

"Get out of here!" laughed Myron; and chased Johnny from the locker-room.

"Me for the intellectual arts!" called back Johnny undaunted. "No coarse-grained labor in mine, like your stuff!"

On this, perhaps, was founded the reason which sent Johnny Hayes between supper and study-hour that night to the room of "Church" Bell at the head of the "masters' stairs" on the second floor.

"Mr. Bell, would you mind please, sir, hearing me recite my lines in the show we're thinking of giving, sir?" began Johnny in a soft tone. "I've been learning 'em, and I think maybe I'd like to be an actor."

The English teacher leaned back in his chair, a funny smile upon his face: he knew Johnny H. Hayes pretty well; so he wondered what was coming. "Why, certainly, Hayes," he replied. "Going to give a show; are you?"

"Yes, sir; we'd like to."

"Have you learned all your lines already?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"Splendid."

"Yes, sir," admitted Johnny; and swallowed conspicuously. "And I was wondering, sir, if—er—if maybe—if I was pretty good in 'em, sir, you might be so kind, sir—as to ——"

"As to let you off in your English, Hayes?" broke in "Church," grinning broadly. "That it?"

"Yes, sir—if you'd be so kind, sir," granted Johnny. "Those were my very thoughts, sir."

"Let's hear the lines then, John; and we'll see."

Now Fatty Williams had seen Johnny enter "Church's" room; and woe still was in Fatty's soul. Fatty even eavesdropped through the partially opened doorway and thereby learned of what was about to occur. Fatty thereupon had an idea: he hustled away but was back in three minutes—and with a siphon of soda, which he had borrowed without asking from Old Hank's room, safely tucked under his arm. He was capably prepared for mischief.

"Shall I close the door, sir, while I recite, sir?" It was Johnny speaking.

"It's not necessary, Hayes."

"I was only thinking, sir, if any uncouth guys,

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I mean fellows, sir, should happen to hear me——”

“But you must get used to an audience, Hayes,” broke in “Church,” unfeelingly.

Johnny ran two fingers under his collar and against his Adam’s apple, and stuck out his chin. “All right, sir, just as you say, sir,” he agreed with a furtive glance toward the doorway, which, however, so far as he could discern, showed no enemies, mortal or otherwise, in sight anywhere; yet he was not quite ready to go on; there might be danger lurking behind that door, though Fat behind it hardly had dared to breathe.

“If we really decide to give the show, Mr. Bell, sir,” John started in again, “do you think we can have it before Christmas, sir?”

“We’ll see, Hayes. It’s possible; provided you men can learn your parts in time.”

That was better.

“I have mine learned all right, sir,” said Johnny; and then with the idea that he would like to hit first if anything dire should prove to be in the offing, he added: “But there are a—lot of dumb-bells around these diggings, sir. Take in this show ‘The Hero’s Revenge,’ sir: if Porky Taylor is to be Captain Potter, the villain, with

all that guy—I mean gentleman—has to say, it'll take Porky at least a couple of years to learn his lines."

"When are you going to recite yours, John?" smilingly asked Mr. Bell again.

"Yes, sir," gulped Johnny. "And if I'm to be the hero, sir," he continued with desperate determination, "and the hero's to have a horse, it's going to take a long time to educate the horse I've picked out. The trouble is, sir, Fatty Williams has been going around so long on his two hind legs, it's going to be awful hard to teach him to go on four!"

"But you can try, John," laughed "Church" Bell.

"Oh, yes, sir, yes, sir; I can try."

A slight stir occurred in the hall; but it was no great noise. If Johnny had heard it, he might have considered that it was the first whirr of the approach of a storm or something.

"Well now, Hayes, stop 'pulling the plug,'" laughed "Church" at last. "Let's hear those lines. Turn around and face the doorway. Imagine all you can see in the darkness of that hall out there is a set of grinning faces. That's the way the audience looks to actors on the stage."

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“Oou!” ejaculated Johnny. “Must I do that, sir?”

“Certainly; you can’t stand and look at me, John, while you recite. You must get used to that black space and the grinning faces. I’ll stay behind you, or rather off to one side of you; just as if I were in the wings of the theatre, and this were a dress rehearsal.”

“Yes, sir,” acknowledged Johnny plaintively. He turned slowly around and faced the doorway.

“Remember, John, that you have treed the villain, Captain Potter,” said the master as he glanced over the tattered book of the play which Johnny had given him. “Turn your head and eyes up toward the ceiling when you now address Captain Potter and pretend he’s in a tree!”

John H. Hayes obeyed, but dubiously.

“Recite!” commanded “Church” Bell.

With head back, mouth wide open, Johnny began to speak: “And I tell you, Captain Potter, dare you so much as even to think of refusing me the whereabouts of your stolen gold, your soul will land in perdition quicker than ——”

Fatty Williams, with eye glued to the crack of the door, let his own soul rise to beatific heights. What if Johnny were in a master’s room? The

penalty to be paid could be little enough for this. Fatty aimed the soda siphon slowly, carefully at John H. Hayes' open mouth; then pressed the handle.

Siss! Sizzle! Squirt! The blast of soda-water shot forward and found its mark squarely against Johnny's left tonsil.

"Blung! Pflouw!" Johnny spat; spattered; nearly choked himself sick.

The soda blast changed direction with Johnny's wriggling motions and pelted Johnny on eyes, nose, and cheek.

"Oh! Oh! Oh! Wait till I get you!"

Johnny forgot Captain Potter, "Church" Bell and all decorum, as amidst the shaking laughter of the master himself, he turned berserker and jumped out of the room in a murderous hunt for this unseen insulting enemy.

Fatty was about three jumps ahead of him; and with siphon abandoned on the floor, flew down the sacred "masters' stairs" four steps at a time, Johnny right behind him.

"You pie-faced, mutton-headed, lop-eared goat!" roared Johnny as he ran. "I'll ——"

At the bottom of the "masters' stairs" in front of the closed door of Bingo's office, Porky, Scho-

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harie, Myron, and Fred Barclay discussed football earnestly and to the exclusion of all consciousness of anything else.

"If, as Fred says, the Trustees have acted, it's all over, Myron," pronounced Schoharie the Silent with finality.

"Not necessarily, Sco, if we put up a fight for it; besides Fred hasn't told anything yet that Bingo has decided."

"Probably Myron's right," declared Porky without reason, but rather because his wish was father to his thought.

Fred Barclay's jaws were twitching nervously, and his brown eyes were like live coals. He just had come from Bingo's office.

And then the avalanche of boys hit them. Fatty and Johnny with a clatter and a bang landed in a heap in their midst. Johnny tripped over Fatty's back and whacked against Myron who thus was suddenly sent shoulders forward into Fred.

"Look where you're going!" cried out Fred angrily, as he put a hand to his mouth and discovered that the impact had caused him to bite his lower lip until it bled. "Get out of here, you fellows; we're talking!"

And Fatty and Johnny indeed quite willingly both disappeared on the instant.

"I'm sorry, Fred, I knocked against you that way; I couldn't help it," apologized Myron.

"Oh, that's all right. I guess there's little more to be said, anyway. It's you fellows always, though: it's always Old Housers who cause trouble."

"Fat isn't an Old Houser, Fred," put in Porky.

"Well, you all know what I mean just the same." Then Fred by a great effort got a better command of himself. "You fellows, all three of you," he added with his old friendly smile, "played a mighty good game this afternoon. But, as I was going to say when those idiots busted in on us, your playing won't do you any good much longer: Bingo'll have some news for you in a little while that'll be real news."

CHAPTER VI

IN THE GYM

"Office of the President.

"GENERAL ORDER 101.

"Owing to the accidents which have taken place on the football field of this school and because of the many serious tendencies in the game here and throughout the country, the playing of American Intercollegiate football will be prohibited after the match with Graylock Academy, on next Saturday, October 6th.

"Graylock felt that it was too late to cancel its game. All other games, however, have been canceled.

"Association football, or 'soccer' may be played; and it is suggested that teams to play this game be organized at once.

"With regard to the remainder of our competition with St. James Durham: St. James has stated its willingness to go ahead with football excluded.

"By order of the President.

"(Signed) MARK LIVINGSTON,

"First Lieutenant and Adjutant.

Monday, 1 October, 19—."

Mark Livingston read the notice to the cadet

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battalion at Chapel formation; turned and pinned the fateful paper carefully to the notice board on the wall behind him.

This, then, was the news from Bingo which Fred had mentioned night before last.

It shot through the body of each rigid cadet like an electric current.

"A fine thing—this!" commented Schoharie the Silent with immobile countenance, as the fellows stood about in groups on the Armory floor just before dinner that day.

"Terrible!" agreed Johnny.

"No more than we expected, though," added Myron grimly.

"Yes; but I didn't really think Bingo'd do it at that." Poor old Porky looked as if he were about to cry. "Isn't there anything we can do, Myron?"

"I don't believe so," answered Myron. "When the O. O. actually has ordered a thing, it's settled; and then it's up to us to end our grouching."

"What's a Commanding Officer for, anyway, Myron, if he's not to grouse at?" Porky began to laugh once more. "I don't like C. O.'s, anyway."

It had been a frightful morning. The cadet.

corps had been marched into Chapel as soon as the order was read; and thence had been marched at once into the School Room for the regular recitations and study. There had been no time until noon for a discussion of the matter; and the strain had been almost unbearable.

"It's all Fred's fault!" shot out Johnny Hayes at last. "If he'd done his job decently as captain of the team, he'd have put up a fight for the game instead of kowtowing to Bingo."

"Cut that out, Johnny," ordered Myron; "Fred did what he thought was right."

"Why should I cut it out?" demanded Johnny. "It's the truth."

A silence came upon the Old House men. For of the various groups of gray uniformed, excited fellows on that Armory floor none was more vociferous than a crowd of Lovering Hall men in the center of the room about ten yards away.

"I tell you, boys, Fred should have gotten the whole team to go to Bingo and protest before this happened. He knew it was coming!" Richards A, left half-back and Case's chum brought out the words with all the vehemence at his command. His cheeks were afire; his black eyes blazing; and his tall, well-built form

quivered. "Fred ought to be ashamed of himself; and all of us on the team ought to be, too!"

Nods and grunts of agreement came from Tibbotts and a half-dozen others.

But George Case declared loudly: "I don't think you've a right to say that. Fred Barclay is one of the finest football captains this school ever had. What could he have done if the President of the school wanted to—wanted to abolish football? What could any guy do?"

Myron Angus from his distance watched George Case closely. Myron was very clear in his own mind regarding the motive behind Case's words: George would like to make it appear that he was Barclay's best and perhaps his only friend; and thus cause further trouble in Old House. "And the funny part of it is," thought Myron, "Case is right about Fred and football; and I've been wrong. What other course had Fred than the one he pursued? Bingo, after all, is the boss."

"A guy can do a lot of stuff, George, if he wants to," came back Richards A. "He can put up a holler for one thing, loud enough for the whole world to hear."

"You bet he can, Dickie!" shouted a cadet.

“You’re right!” cried out another. “Barclay’s let the school down!”

“Fellows!” spoke a clear strong voice, “Fred did the best he could, and that was as much as any man here in this school could have done!”

Every head instinctively turned at the ring in those words, and gazed into the flashing dark eyes of Myron Angus.

“That’s it, Myron!” cried Case instantly, his own eyes gleaming. “That’s just what I’ve been telling these guys!”

Myron Angus scarcely deigned to notice him; he looked calmly into the faces of the crowd which now surrounded him. “It’s up to us to be good soldiers and swallow our medicine with a smile,” he went on; “and not take out our disappointment on the man who’s done the best he could and so far has led the team to victory!”

“Oou! oou!” groaned a good many voices.

“Aaay! Aaay!” agreed some others.

“That kind of talk makes me sick!” spoke up Richards A. “It’s ——”

But Richards A did not finish; for at that moment another cadet entered the Armory: Fred Barclay with eyes straight in front of him, glancing neither to the right nor to the left,

walked swiftly upon his own business through the room and off into the hallway beyond. And as he disappeared George Case followed him.

"I'm no toadier to the Faculty, George, nor to Bingo, either," declared Fred in the hall a moment later, his big brown eyes wide.

"Of course you're not," condoled George Case; "everybody with sense knows that."

"I know the fellows hate me," continued Fred hotly. "I don't blame 'em much. I thought I was doing right. Bingo is the C. O., any way you look at it."

"Of course he is, Fred. All will realize that pretty soon."

"Maybe they will. But those fellows back in the Armory are all pretty sore at me just the same."

"Well, they were, I guess," responded George; "but they'll get over it."

"I saw Angus there, too," continued Fred. "I presume he was one of the worst against me; wasn't he?"

"No he wasn't," answered George. "That was the funny part of it. I don't understand him at all."

"I don't understand him, either." A bitter

smile flashed across Fred's dark face. "Myron's been one of the worst against me right along."

"I know it," sympathized George.

Fred looked away. Racing through his brain now was the thought that in the view of the school he was a deserter, a deserter of his teammates and of his own game. While Angus—Angus had stood up for the game. Fred's fists clenched. Oh, well, the point was that no man who was despised by his fellows was any good. That was it. That was the point; that was the awful point.

"Thanks very much, old man, for coming to me," he said to Case quickly as he turned his head back to George. "I must go now. I'll see you later."

And Case, surprised and a little shocked, answered: "All right. I just wanted you to know; that was all."

Fred alone in his own room some moments afterward fought out his battle; fought and lost: he gave way to hatred of every one, especially of Angus; blamed all others but himself for his unhappiness; determined that one of these days soon he'd show the school who was the better man, Myron Angus or himself.

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That afternoon the football practice was light. Monty's heart wasn't in it; neither was Fred's.

"Just the same, men," grinned Monty ruefully and yet determinedly as the team finally came off the field, "let's brace up and die game. Graylock is Saturday. Let's lick 'em!"

Fred shot a quick smile at the coach.

"What do you say, fellows?" laughed Monty. "I'm all gloomed out! How about you fellows?"

"I'm for licking 'em!" cried out Myron.

"Me, too!" added Porky Taylor with a laugh.

"Same here!" declared Richards A.

"That's the eye, boys!" agreed Monty. "Let's clean 'em up as the last and best thing we do!"

Everybody roared now; and Monty put his hand on Fred's shoulder. "Brace up, old skinnermarink," he whispered. "This gang'll all be with you in no time. All out at four to-morrow, fellows," Monty added to the team, "and for a good, tough scrimmage, too!"

"Yea! Aaay!"

The practice, having been very light, as has been noted, Fred, Myron, and Richards A, before taking showers, went into the Gym. A half-dozen little boys followed them. These three football men easily were the best gymnasts in Chatham;

and frequently in games of tag ran all over the rafters on the inside of the dome of the building, and up the narrow planking superimposed horizontally against the walls and over the beams which crossed the width of the Gym. They played like young lynxes in a grove of trees.

“You’re ‘it,’ Angus!” cried Richards A.

“All right! Wait a sec!”

The three stripped off their football shoes and jerseys; and, stocking-footed, leaped for the Gym walls: Fred ahead of the others; Richards A off in another direction; Myron after Fred. Up the side of the wall Fred sped, Myron at his heels; across a beam; up the inside of the dome, their backs to the floor; down the other wall to the floor again; across the Gym; and up once more on the opposite wall to the beam across the building. Neither gained a foot on the other. They approached the center of the Gym, high above the heads of all.

“Go it, Fred!”

“Go it, Myron!” yelled the little boys.

“Catch him, Myron! He let the team down!” It was a treble voice which sounded that cry. No one seemed to know whose words they were. They may have come from little Thomas Hiller;

for he was there, his near-sighted eyes peering hard through his spectacles. But all knew at once that in any event a tragedy was upon them. For as the words smashed against the roof of the Gym, Fred Barclay dropped lithely from the beam to the floor seven feet under him; and like a cat Myron Angus instantly followed.

"You heard what that kid just yelled?" shot out Fred, as the two stood before each other, with all eyes upon them.

"I did," answered Myron quietly.

"All right then; I'm telling you that I've had all I'm going to from you. You started this thing against me on the field the day the St. James challenge was received."

"I didn't mean to start anything against you," replied Myron honestly. "I only told you what I think a man has a right to say, especially when he's on the team."

"Is that so?" Fred lowered his head and glared savagely at his fellow Old House man. "Well, you'll lay off anything in the future that I'm connected with. Get that now; or I'll know why."

Myron met Fred's angry gaze unflinchingly. "I'll do what seems right to me," he answered,

his voice very low. "And, Fred, don't threaten. That'll get you nowhere."

"It won't; won't it?"

"No," answered Myron.

"Then maybe this will!"

With the quickness of lightning, his control entirely gone, Fred sent a stinging blow from his open palm against Myron's cheek.

For a moment Myron stood stock still. His fingers went to the purple spot where Fred's palm had hit him. A flush mounted to the roots of his hair; his eyes remained fixed upon Fred Barclay. "You'll fight me for that, Fred," he said at length, his voice very cool and even, "and you'll do it now!"

"All right," answered Fred; and then added, strangely: "But I really don't want to fight you, Myron. For one reason, I think I can lick you!"

"All the more reason then for proving it," replied Myron, his black eyes steady on the larger boy.

CHAPTER VII

THE BATTLE OF THE GIANTS

"FIGHT! Fight! Fight!" shrieked a small boy suddenly. And the cry was taken up at once by the others; and went echoing toward the school.

"They say it's Fred and Myron!" shot out Porky Taylor as he rushed by Johnny Hayes in front of the main building, and rounded the corner toward the Gym, his face serious, his bristly tow-colored eyebrows and hair sticking straight up in the sunlight.

Johnny followed Porky instantly. A string of racing, gray-coated cadets were on the run toward the Gym also.

"Fight! Fight! Fight!" All over the school the cry resounded.

In the Gym the two fighters quickly stripped bare to the waist. A "ring" twenty feet square was paced off by cadets and was marked at the corners by gray blouses on the floor.

"I'm seconding you, Myron," murmured Porky as he came up to his chum.

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"Thanks, Pork."

"How did it happen?"

"Tell you later."

"That's all right. Any chance of patching it up for—for—Old House's sake?"

"No." Myron undisturbed eyed the magnificent rippling muscles of the man who now stood in a corner of the ring diagonally opposite him.

"Just a sec then," said Porky; and walked over to Fred. "Who's seconding you, Freddy?" he asked easily.

"I don't know." Fred's tone was low. "Case wants to. I don't want him. I'd like one of our own fellows."

"You don't need any second, Fred; you're crazy; what you need is a nurse," answered Porky earnestly. "Get over there now and make up with Myron, for—for Old House's sake."

"It's too late."

"Will you if Myron will?"

"He won't: I told him I didn't want to fight him."

Porky looked back whence he had come. Myron's body was bent over. He was rubbing the bottom part of his stockings in dust from the Gym floor as an aid against slipping. Porky

gazed a moment in silence at the vast broad shoulders, the long powerful arms dark with hair, the strong big hands, the thin, muscular waist.

"Myron!" he called gently. Myron looked up. "Will you come over here and shake?"

"After this is over," replied Myron.

The Gym filled up fast with out-of-breath cadets who crowded about the two fighters.

Porky faced Fred again. "What reason did you give him for not wanting to fight?" he asked.

Fred told him.

Porky's little blue eyes squinted as a quizzical smile spread over his ruddy face. "Well maybe you can't lick him, Fred," he said. "Have you thought about that?"

"I can lick him," answered Fred quietly.

"Then I guess you'd better get a second. What about Fatty Williams? He's a neutral. Will he do?"

Fred nodded yes.

"Better take Tibbotts for Fatty's assistant. He's good enough, anyway, to fan you with his blouse."

"All right," agreed Fred and beckoned to the Lovering Hall man.

"And now," grinned on Porky, his stout legs

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spread apart, his arms on his hips, "I'm against you during this fight. But just as an act of old friendship, I'll send up to the Infirmary for the nurse before we start in and have her ready to bring you back to life after my man gets through with you." Whereat Porky recrossed the ring to his gladiator.

Johnny now was beside Myron ready to assist Porky. Varick W, the Lovering Hall man who was Junior Captain of the battalion, was chosen referee; Atkins W, the Senior Captain, time-keeper.

"Keep back from the ring, you fellows, and away from the fighters!" ordered Schoharie the Silent, who with Mark Livingston and two or three others formed a self-constituted police force.

The crowd of cadets moved backward.

Junior Captain Varick stood in the center of the marked-off space. Fred and Myron waited in the ring corners diagonally opposite each other.

"Your man ready, Taylor?" inquired Varick.

"You bet," answered Porky.

"Yours ready, Williams?"

"Sure," grinned Fatty.

“Shake hands, you two.”

Fred and Myron approached each other in the center of the ring and coldly shook each other's right hand once.

“Hitting in clinches with one arm free goes,” declared Varick W. “Time!” he called out.

Not even for an instant did the two barefisted boys crouch to feel each other out before starting hostilities. Instead Fred Barclay, his eyes ablaze, leaped straight into Angus and shot a terrific blow with his left fist against Myron's stomach. Myron doubled over; Fred's right crashed against Myron's jaw. Myron's head flew back. He tried to side step; struck out wildly, desperately. Fred was on top of him like a tiger; hit him mercilessly, rights and lefts. One! Two! One! Two! One! Two! on jaw and eyes and nose.

Myron tottered backward; his mouth and nose were bleeding! Again Fred's right crashed: this time flush against Myron's cheek.

At first the crowd was stunned to silence; now all broke out into wild yells:

“Aaay! aaay! Put him out, Freddy!”

“You've got him! You've got him!”

“Put him out!”

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“Put him out!”

“Hang on, Myron! Hang on!”

“Dive into him! Dive into him, Myron. And hold! Hold!” It was Porky dancing in his corner, shrieking above the din. “You’ll get him then! Hang onto him, Myron!”

Myron’s eyes were fixed on Fred; his arms seemed rigid; his jaws were tight; his body was hunched; his head slightly forward: a fine figure though smaller than Fred Barclay.

Suddenly he sank downward, his knees bending.

“Dive at him!” yelled Johnny frantic. “Dive—you bonehead! Please! Please!”

And Myron, through sheer will power, summoned brain and muscle. He dived into Fred; and at the same moment swung his massive right fist wildly. The blow landed square on Fred Barclay’s temple.

“Oh! Yow! Wow!”

“Myron!”

“Myron!”

Fred’s face relaxed; his arms dropped; and Myron sank against him.

“Stall! Stall, Fred!” begged Tibbotts.

“Break away, you fellows!” Varick W shoved

his body between the two and forced them apart. For an instant Myron and Fred stood wabbling before each other, their fists in fighting posture. Both were near to exhaustion. Then Fred's body tightened; his jaws set; his brown eyes took fire again.

"Clinch! Clinch, Myron!" warned Porky.

But Myron as yet had few thoughts in his brain.

Fred feinted with his left; and sent a crashing blow with his right square to the point of Myron's jaw.

As though shot Myron Angus dropped to the floor.

"One! two! three! four!" Varick W stood over him; and, with arm moving up and down with each count, checked off the terrible seconds while the cadets in silence watched and listened. "Five! six! seven! eight! nine!—ten!—he's out!"

"Men, enough of this!" a voice suddenly thundered. Every head turned to the square-shouldered Commandant who at that instant entered the Gym. "All of you, get out of here and quick!"

But Porky, Johnny, Fatty Williams, Scho-

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harie, and Fred Barclay paid T. J. no attention, though the others quickly filed out of the building under the urging of Atkins W and the Junior Captain Varick.

The Old House men were kneeling beside their prostrate friend.

"He's coming to," murmured Johnny at length.

"He'll be all right in just a minute," said Porky.

Blood oozed slowly from Myron's nose and from a vicious cut on his lower lip; and his left eye was swollen to the size of a small egg.

T. J. knelt down, too; felt Myron's pulse. "He's not badly hurt, men."

"Then—then—I—I haven't killed him, sir? Oh, oh, what have I done?"

Colonel Meadows stood up and looked into the unhappiest face he thought he ever had seen on a cadet of Chatham. "No, you haven't killed him, Fred; and you haven't done anything terrible, either; for it was a fair fight, I suppose?"

"I don't know, sir." And then Fred Barclay dropped down to Myron's side and put his arm under Myron's head. "Are you all right, old fellow—are you? Are you?" he whispered fe-

verishly, as Myron at last opened his eyes. "Oh, I'm sorry, awfully sorry. I outweighed you ten pounds. Are you all right?"

"Sure," smiled Myron somewhat wanly. "Here's my hand on it. I'm satisfied, too."

"Forgive me; will you?" begged Fred.

"Of course. Forgive me. You said you didn't want to fight." And then Myron pulled himself together still more: he sat up and grinned at T. J., at Johnny and at Porky. "His fists are made out of stone," he said, his voice shaking a bit. "Did anybody ever get a worse licking?"

CHAPTER VIII

THE POWER-HOUSE

“IT’LL clear the atmosphere, anyway,” concluded Schoharie the Silent sagely that night; “and everybody will be better for it.”

“Shouldn’t be surprised,” agreed Porky.

But Johnny Hayes wasn’t so optimistic. “You athletes are like a bunch of children,” declared Johnny with great superiority. “No guy who got the licking Myron got likes the man who gave it to him; and no man who gives such a licking likes himself for handing it out to one of his own clubmen. And when a man doesn’t like himself, he’s sore on the other fellow, as Fred will be on Myron. Human nature is human nature.”

And Johnny wasn’t far from right: at least George Case felt much the same way; for George declaimed in a like manner that very evening to Tibbotts and Richards A; and also laughed long and loud at the expense of Fred and Myron in particular and at all Old House men in general.

As to Colonel Meadows and most of the school: T. J. had been a master many years; and to him

a fight, so long as it was fair, was out of mind about as quickly as it was over. To the majority of the boys, the fight of course was quite a topic of conversation ; but the points always uppermost were the acknowledgment that Barclay was far the better man ; and that next spring Fred very easily might represent the school in all three Single Combat events.

Myron was quickly patched up in the Infirmary. And the school agreed with him thoroughly that no man before ever had received such a licking as Fred Barclay handed out.

“ Isn’t Fred a holy marvel? ”

“ The best athlete this or any other place ever saw ! ”

“ Jack Dempsey couldn’t have had much on him when Jack was Fred’s age ! ”

“ And he’s as wonderful in the Gym as he is in the ring ! ”

“ And wrestle ! Boy, he can pin the shoulders of any man in school to the mat just as quickly as he put Myron out ! ”

“ St. James Durham has nobody in his class ! ”

“ Myron’s game, though. You bet he’s game ; and a dandy athlete, too ! But he’s just not in Fred’s class ! ”

These remarks were typical ; and tell their own story.

So when football practice was called the next afternoon and Fred and Myron both appeared and hopped into their work as though nothing had happened, each was given a rousing cheer by the cadets on the side lines.

Yet a strange thing was noticed : Bingo Crawford apparently either knew nothing, or oddly had decided to say nothing, about the fight.

“ T. J. is a great old sport ; isn’t he ? ” vouchsafed Porky.

“ Good enough,” admitted Johnny.

The following day was Thursday, the weekly holiday. The Commandant had agreed to take a party of boys to one of the power-houses at Niagara Falls and show them as much as he could in an afternoon about the electrical energy caught out of the great river.

“ Oh, Colonel Meadows, take me ; will you please, sir ? ”

“ Me, too, sir.”

“ And me ! ”

A crowd of small boys surrounded T. J. who stood at the old horse-block in front of the main building.

“Can’t take you all, men; not this trip, anyway. I’ve agreed to take a half-dozen of you lower-formers already. Let’s see,” he continued, as he smilingly surveyed the cadets, took off his military cap and mopped his bald head which glistened in the September sun. “And besides you youngsters, Case is going and Richards A, Taylor, Hayes, Tibbotts, Angus, Williams, Schoharie, Barclay. And, Captain Atkins, you’ll go with us; will you?”

“I should be pleased, sir,” bowed the tall, dark Senior Captain.

“Could I please go, sir, too?” pleaded a very small youngster, his near-sighted eyes blinking through spectacles.

“I said we’d take you, Hiller,” answered Colonel Meadows, as he glanced down at the pathetic-appearing little new cadet.

And then another little fellow, with tow hair and blue eyes stood before the Commandant and looked up at him silently.

T. J. grinned. “Now look here, Philip Heathecote,” he said, “what are you trying to do?”

“I’d like to go, too, sir.”

“I thought your eyes were so bad you couldn’t do arithmetic yesterday.”

“They were, sir—then.”

“But they’re better to-day. Is that it?”

Philip came a little closer; and, with head upraised to the Commandant, drew down the under lid of his right eye with the index finger of his right hand. “You see, it’s still pretty bad, sir,” he declared. “It still squirts water right out every fifteen minutes, sir.”

“It what?”

“Yes, sir: water squirts right out of that eye, sir, every fifteen minutes. But that’s lots better than it was.”

“Oh, I see,” replied the Commandant gravely. “Well, if that’s the case, perhaps you’d better come along with us then and keep Thomas Hiller company.”

“Thank you, sir—very much, sir.”

“How’s your right eye, Sergeant?” chuckled T. J. to Myron in a low tone as the youngster turned away. “Is it squirting water, too?”

“It squirted the river full day before yesterday, sir,” laughed Myron Angus; “so I guess it’s done its entire job.”

“All aboard, men!” cried T. J. “Let’s go.”

But as Colonel Meadows spoke, the door of the office of the President of the school opened and

Bingo Crawford appeared upon the walk. A tall, thin man, with closely cropped gray hair and a hawk-like eye, the C. O. looked the part of soldier and just disciplinarian. Every cadet quite naturally came to attention as Bingo walked up to the group.

"Angus and Barclay," the President said quietly, "when you two men return from the Falls come into my office, please?" Then with a smile and a wave of his hand he called out: "Good luck, gentlemen;" and retired to his office.

"Gone geese, both of 'em!" muttered Johnny as Colonel Crawford disappeared. "That's not so good!"

"All ready, men?" called out T. J.

"Yes, sir!" answered the fellows.

As they skirted the football field through the lane of pines which guard the winding drive to the gate of the school grounds, the Commandant said: "I want to compliment you football men and tell you that I think it shows good pluck in view of the existing circumstances for the team to go ahead with nothing else in mind but licking the stuffing out of Graylock next Saturday. Many a team wouldn't do that. But it's

the only way, men—fight to the end in everything.”

The cadets nodded but said little; though they were very appreciative of T. J.’s words.

“I suppose, sir, football is really gone, sir; isn’t it?” asked Johnny Hayes as they reached the Lewiston Road and a Falls trolley-car hove in sight.

“Yes, Hayes: I’m afraid it is.”

“Oh, well then,” declared Johnny, “no use kicking about what can’t be helped as the Bible says. So me on this bright day will feast my eyes upon Niagara unless before we get there somebody has moved the doggone Falls!”

“Righto, Johnny,” laughed Colonel Meadows. “And now,” he went on after the boys had seated themselves in the trolley-car, “we might as well understand a little of what we pass by.”

“When I first came to Chatham—let’s see,” T. J. rubbed his chin and smiled. “Great Scott, men, it’s ’most forty years ago!” He breathed deeply. “Well, anyway, I played right half-back on the school team in those days even though I was a master, right half-back, your place, Taylor W.”

“Yes, sir.”

T. J. looked out the car window and pointed to the buildings of the city. "None of these houses was built then; this was all country. The town had about eight or ten thousand inhabitants and it has now —— How many do you say, Myron?"

"About sixty thousand, I should say, sir," answered Myron Angus.

"That's about right. Well, gentlemen, that's quite a growth; isn't it?"

"You bet it is, sir!" responded a number of voices.

"Yes, sir."

"That was made possible by the electrical power developed from the river," continued the Commandant.

"How do you mean, sir?" asked Porky.

"Electrical power produced direct from water alongside the power-house is cheaper than that produced from steam made from coal, which first has to be dug out of a mine; and then oftener than not hauled a long distance to the power-house."

"You mean then, sir," asked Fred Barclay, "that electrical power produced from water really is simply made by sticking a water-wheel

into water and letting the river current turn the wheel around? ”

“ That’s about it, put simply,” said T. J. “ That’s the basis of it, Fred.”

“ Then it’s just like a wheel in an old grist-mill ; isn’t it? ” broke in Porky, whose father was a farmer who dwelt outside of Lockport. “ Jiminy! The running water turns the wheel; the wheel turns the shaft, which turns the machinery, which grinds the flour.” Porky grinned. “ Is that right, sir? ”

“ It is, Taylor W.”

“ There, you guys! ” laughed Porky and stuck out his great chest. “ Not so dumb! Ask me another! ”

Johnny Hayes was looking at his chum with awe. “ You mean that in the power-houses here, sir,” took up Johnny, “ that running water hits a wheel, turns it; and the wheel turns a shaft which turns machinery which —— Oh, pooh, Colonel!” blushed Johnny, “ I’m all twisted up! ”

“ You’re all right, Hayes. Go on: which machinery now makes electricity,” added the Commandant, “ generates it, as it is called. And this electricity is a power in itself with a faculty

of running machinery such as that in cotton mills, steel plants, and abrasive factories. And electricity also makes light, as you know. Well, electricity can be and is sent over wires for many miles to distant cities such as Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse, and like places miles away."

"But how does that make a city grow, sir?" broke in Porky again.

"Manufacturing plants all need power to run their machinery," replied T. J. "Machines can be run, of course, by steam. As I have said, however, steam comes from coal, which has to be mined and generally hauled, and it costs more money than power obtained through a wheel which is turned by running water. Naturally a manufacturer wants to produce his goods as cheaply as he can, so that he can sell them more easily, and make all the money possible. Therefore, he will try to build his plant where he can get the cheapest power."

"And that's here at Niagara," said Myron.

"Sure it is, Myron," approved Fred. "We've always lived on the river and my dad's told me lots about it."

"Well, when I first came to Chatham," concluded the Commandant, "there was only one

small power-plant at Niagara which made electricity for manufacturing. Since then all the power-houses you see on the river have been built. Then manufacturers brought their factories here; these factories employed people; and people have families. So the city has grown from about eight thousand to over sixty thousand."

"Now I see!" exclaimed Porky.

"Me, too," added Johnny.

"Thanks, sir," said Myron. "Thanks for telling us."

"Thanks very, very much, sir," echoed the others.

The street-car reached the south end of the city of Niagara Falls and stopped in front of a beautiful steel and concrete building, located perhaps three-quarters of a mile from the Cataract.

"Here's the power-house we're going to visit!" called T. J. "All out, men!"

The boys scrambled from the car and to the street. Beyond the building could be seen the swift-flowing river shortly before it makes its final rush in rapids to the brink over which it falls to the gorge one hundred and sixty feet below.

"There, boys, we'll first glance at the ma-

chinery inside the power-house," declared the Commandant; "then we'll go outside on the wall in which is the opening where the water enters and goes inside the power-house to turn the wheel."

They entered a long, comparatively narrow building of tremendous height, with a red tiled floor and white walls. Vast steel girders, all painted white, ran up the walls to a dome-like ceiling far above a network of other white girders which crossed the building from side wall to side wall. A narrow iron stairway, glistening in black paint, ran high against the wall opposite them to an open doorway near the cross girders, through which the blue of the sky could be clearly seen.

A low humming of fast-moving electrical machinery met their ears. Close in front of them stood a circular, black-painted steel casing about forty feet in diameter, only half of which was visible, however, above the floor. Attached to the front edge of the casing was a machine, not unlike the casing in general appearance, but about one-quarter its size.

"Inside that casing, boys," explained the Commandant, "is the water-wheel. That smaller ma-

chine attached to it is the generator which makes the electricity."

The boys stood for a moment in silence as they looked. Then Porky asked, "Are those other big machines beyond just the same as these two, sir?"

"Yes," replied T. J. He led the party down the side of the narrow building to the center, and the boys counted five more great water-wheel casings and generators.

"This power unit, that is, all these machines considered together as a single unit," explained Colonel Meadows, "is one of the largest in the world. The water-wheel inside is tremendous." The Commandant turned to a power-house employee: "Just how heavy is it, sir, if you please?"

"It weighs over fifty tons," answered the employee.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Colonel Meadows.

"That wheel in there makes over one hundred revolutions a minute," added the power-house man as he faced the boys.

Murmurs of awe came from all sides.

"What happens to the water after it's gone over the wheel, sir?" asked Johnny.

"It goes back to the river through a steel tunnel which we call the tail race," replied the power-house man.

"We'll see that afterward, boys," put in T. J.

The Commandant turned now to a huge slate switchboard which stood against the wall behind them.

"Those handles on this switchboard are the controls by which the power is switched on and off," he said. "We'll now go outside on the top of the wall through an opening in which the water goes to these wheels."

The boys then followed T. J. up the iron stairs at the end of the building and out on the wall. As they looked out from the top of the wall, the river from miles to the south seemed to be coming upon them like a vast relentless force. But just before it reached them, the greater part of the foaming water was diverted to the right of the power-house, and passed on in an endless racing current.

The remainder of the water, however, came toward them more quietly, and, as though it were tired, eased itself against the wall whereon the boys stood.

"See, men: look down just under you!" cried

Colonel Meadows. "See that iron grating through which the water is flowing?"

The boys gazed over the safety rail against which they were standing, down upon the water-side of the wall, at an iron grating which sloped outward and away from them and so disappeared into the depths. The river jammed against the bars of the grating, and passing between, entered the wall.

"That's where the water goes into the tube or penstock and rushes on until it hits the water-wheel in the power-house," explained T. J. "The grating is known as the trash rack. It keeps all sorts of stuff out of the penstock."

All looked intently and watched the flow as it sped through the openings between the bars and entered the penstock.

"If a fellow should fall into the water and get his hand caught between those bars on the rack, sir," said Porky with a grin, "he'd be a gone bozo!"

"He would," laughed the genial Commandant. "But don't fall in!" And T. J. winked at Myron Angus. "Right, Angus?"

"Right as right, sir."

"I won't fall in," declared Porky.

And then suddenly a splash was heard.

“What’s that!” cried out Colonel Meadows, his face blanched, as he swung completely around. “A boy’s in!”

CHAPTER IX

AGAINST THE RACK

WITHOUT hesitation, Myron Angus vaulted the railing and leaped into the water.

In two powerful strokes he was beside a struggling boy whom the current of the river drove against the rack.

Fatty Williams, with nose and mouth just at the water's level, struck at the iron bars of the grating with hands and feet; tried to gain a hold and pull himself to safety. But the slope of the rack was against him. He attempted desperately to raise himself once, twice; and then with sudden despair in his face, he sank down and the water covered him.

All took but a few seconds; but in them Myron realized that Porky's prediction had come true. Myron dived deep toward Fat; saw that one of Fatty's hands had been jammed between two of the bars of the rack. Myron caught Fatty's wrist; yanked it; but the effort forced him to try to breathe. He shot up to the surface; inhaled

quickly; and dived again. The water was clear. He could see Fat floating face downward, absolutely unconscious, with knees bent, and the imprisoned hand holding him as a hawser holds a boat to its dock.

Again Myron grabbed; and this time turned Fat's hand; then yanked with all his strength; Fat was freed. Myron seized him by the hair; and with a powerful effort brought himself and Fat to the surface.

T. J. and Porky jumped into the water. Excited fellows leaned over the wall and gazed down at them, Fred Barclay with the rest, his dark face twitching.

"Lie flat on your belly, Barclay!" commanded T. J. as he swam, "and give us a hand!"

Fred obeyed.

Porky and T. J. now were on either side of Myron and the unconscious Fat; and they pushed and lifted the two up until Fred could reach them. Then Fred, with the help of Richards A, Johnny, and Schoharie, hauled Fat to the top of the wall. The boys were strangely silent, as in terror they watched men from the power-house administer first aid.

At length Fat was brought back to life, and

hurried in a taxi to the school Infirmary, with Johnny and the dripping Myron, T. J., and Porky watching over him.

"Oh, isn't this terrible!" gasped small Philip Heathecote.

Little Thomas Hiller blinked; he seemed too frightened to answer.

"Will he live, Atkins, will he?" Philip turned a strained face up to the Senior Captain.

"I don't know; I think so," answered Atkins W.

"Did you see how it happened?" Atkins W asked Schoharie as the taxi shot away.

"When T. J. was talking, Fat must have climbed up on the railing," responded Schoharie the Silent. "I saw him just as he lost his balance. His legs seemed to go up in the air and he fell. He was off at the far end of the rail, away from the rest."

"Getting funny—poor old Fat!" commented Atkins W in a low voice.

Schoharie the Silent nodded.

"By George, though, Sco," continued Atkins W, "Myron may not be so good a fighter as Fred Barclay, but he has the stoutest heart I ever saw."

"It's stouter than Fred's or yours or mine," replied the Silent Man almost under his breath; "lots stouter, thank Heaven."

"That's what I meant," answered the Senior Captain gravely.

The cadet party which remained was very solemn indeed as it waited for the trolley-car to take it back to school; and every man seemed to feel, as Schoharie and the Senior Captain felt, a deep thankfulness above everything for the courage and ability for instant action of Myron Angus.

"Isn't Myron a peach?" small boys kept repeating. "O my, isn't he a peach?"

"And old T. J., too!"

"And Porky!"

"Isn't Myron a peach!"

Only little Thomas Hiller and George Case appeared to get out at all from under the spell.

For as at last the boys started to board the street-car, little Hiller glanced furtively about him; dashed from the crowd into a drug store on the corner; came out again quickly with fists filled with slot-machine chocolates and rushed back to the car. The drug-store proprietor, a queer expression on his face, followed little

Hiller to the sidewalk; stopped there; and shaking his head peered after the small gray-coated back.

George Case took this all in; and as Hiller entered the trolley George's lips closed tightly, then opened again. But George made no comment. Instead he took a seat alongside Fred Barclay. "That was a nervy thing for Angus to do, all right," he remarked after a moment. "Wasn't it?"

"You bet it was," replied Fred and turned his head to look out the window.

"I hope Fat pulls through O. K.," continued George.

"So do I," replied Fred without movement.

"Are you all right?" asked George.

Fred swung around. "What's the matter with you, anyway?" he demanded with irritation. "Of course I'm all right."

"Oh, I didn't mean anything, Fred."

"Well, don't talk so much then." Fred turned back to the window.

As the party reached school and hurried to the Infirmary to inquire about Fatty, the sick-room door opened and Bingo Crawford came out.

"Williams is all right now, gentlemen," said

Bingo. "The doctor is still in with him. Better all go now and get cleaned up for supper." He turned to the Senior Captain and Fred Barclay: "He must have climbed up on the rail when no one was looking, so they tell me."

"So I understand, sir," answered Atkins W.

"Poor fellow, and just fell in."

"Yes, sir."

"Fortunate that Angus acted as he did; wasn't it?"

"Very, sir," replied Atkins W.

"Never mind coming in to see me, Lieutenant," added Bingo to Fred. "We'll let go for a while the matter about which I intended to speak to you. I've already told Angus."

"Very well, sir," acknowledged Fred.

Just before "taps" that night Fred Barclay stood alone before his mirror. A deep-chested, broad-shouldered, muscular figure he saw; with square jaws and a darkly bearded though cleanly shaven face, which now was flushed at the cheekbones.

"You were a coward, Barclay," he muttered to the image he beheld. "That's what you were this afternoon—a yellow, rotten coward; and you have been right along!"

He stepped to his door; locked it; threw himself down upon his bed; and with unseeing eyes fixed upon the ceiling, repeated the words over and over again: "A yellow, rotten coward, that's what you are!"

At length he leaped up, his fists clenched. "A man's own club, though," he cried half aloud, "needn't go back on him just because things happen to break wrong for once!"

Next morning at Chapel Formation, Adjutant Mark Livingston appeared before the line. The battalion was brought to rest. And Adjutant Livingston read the following orders:

"Office of the President,
"GENERAL ORDER 102:

"Cadet First Sergeant Myron Angus is hereby commended for his bravery at the power-house yesterday afternoon. Sergeant Angus's act in plunging into the water to save the life of a cadet of the school was done with complete disregard of self and was over and beyond the call of duty. The school thanks him and congratulates him. This commendation will be made a part of his official record as a cadet in the Chatham Military School.

"WILLIAM CRAWFORD, President.

"T. J. MEADOWS, Commandant.

5 October, 19—."

"Office of the President,

"GENERAL ORDER 103:

"The school hereby thanks Colonel T. J. Meadows and Second Sergeant Taylor W for their valor while helping Sergeant Angus bring to safety the cadet who had fallen into the water yesterday at the power-house.

"WILLIAM CRAWFORD, President.

5 October, 19—."

Adjutant Mark Livingston pinned the orders on the notice-board behind him; and then, despite discipline, Johnny Hayes broke out of ranks; and, standing before the double line with right arm raised, shouted: "Three cheers for Myron Angus, fellows! Hip! hip!"

"Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!" thundered the battalion.

"What's the matter with Angus?" yelled on Johnny.

"He's all right!" roared back the fellows.

"Who's all right?"

"Angus! Angus! Angus!
Myron, old boy!"

And then: "Three rousers now for Colonel Meadows and Porky Taylor!"

"Hooray!" bellowed the battalion. "Hooray! Hooray!"

“Colonel Meadows! Colonel Meadows! Colonel Meadows!
Taylor! Taylor! Taylor!”

Myron, as First Sergeant of Company A stood behind the rear rank at the right of the line. With every man's eyes turned toward him, he stared straight ahead, his cheeks burning; and he was as uncomfortable as any modest man could be under such circumstance. Porky grinned and looked foolish; he wasn't having any too much fun, either. T. J. was not in the Armory.

“Company A!—Attention!” cried out Atkins W.

“Company B!—Attention!” yelled Varick.

“Band!—Attention!” thundered a lad named Claymore, who was acting band leader for the day.

The men clicked to rigidity.

Johnny started back to his place in the rear rank, but purposely went around the right of the line in order to pass by Myron.

“Hello,” he chuckled as he reached him. “You look as if you'd swallowed the kitchen stove!”

CHAPTER X

THE GRAYLOCK GAME

“ ALL out, football practice ! ” Monty the coach yelled the words in the locker room that afternoon. “ Signal practice only, men. Get a wiggle on you ! ”

The team left the main building singly and in pairs; and moved along the cement walk to the campus which lay in its quadrilateral of pines between the school and the Lewiston Road.

“ To-morrow is the last game we’ll ever play here, Sco,” remarked Fred Barclay as he and Schoharie the Silent walked on together, each with his head-gear looped over an arm and with their cleated football shoes clanking loudly on the sidewalk.

Schoharie nodded.

“ I know I’m in bad, Sco, with everybody,” continued Fred. “ What would you do about it if you were in my place ? ”

“ Lick Graylock to-morrow,” responded the Silent Man laconically.

"Sure; I know. That's—that's just what—we're—going to do. Sure." Fred shut his teeth. For a moment he could have "socked" Schoharie. He even wished, too, for a second that he did not have to play in the game to-morrow.

"Hello, fellows." It was George Case.

George joined them; but set a slower pace; and Fred dropped back with him.

"Gloomy Gus to-day; eh, Freddy? Don't blame you much. It is tough luck that to-morrow is the last game."

"It sure is," answered Fred.

"Who's going to play left end in Williams' place?" asked George.

"Claymore."

George made no comment. Claymore, "Old Clay," was twenty-two, the oldest boy in school; dumb as an ox, but an Old House man. George was not pleased; yet knew better than to say so.

"I feel sorry for you, Fred, about football and everything. I sure do."

"Thanks," answered the football captain. "I'm sorry myself."

"Yes," declared George. "You've had a raw time lately. Say ——" George touched Fred's arm and the two stopped by the pines at the edge

of the campus. "Say, why do you let your supposed friends hand it out to you so?" George turned his gaze up in apparent frankness. "I don't mean to butt in; but why do you?"

"Are they handing it out to me?" smiled Fred as he looked sharply at the smaller boy.

"Aren't they?" came back George.

"I don't know; do you?"

"Well, if you don't you're dumber than you look, Fred. They're trying to show you up all the time. I'd like to see that tried in Lovering Hall."

"Aw, ballywhizzle, George."

"All right. Just the same I'd—I suppose they weren't showing you up on the campus the day St. James's challenge was received; and what did they do at the fight? I'd never let 'em get away with that stuff, you can bet. And now with yesterday ——"

"What about yesterday?" demanded Fred instantly, every nerve alert.

"Oh, nothing. Only you can see for yourself; can't you?"

"What's anybody said?"

"Nothing, I tell you."

"Yes they have." Fred's eyes bored into George. "What is it?"

"Nothing." George did not move. "Only you're no dumb-bell, Fred. I was there at the power-house, too. Say, I'd show up Schoharie and Taylor and Angus if I never did another thing. You could do it to-morrow if you wanted to. What do you care? It's our last game, anyway."

Fred did not utter a word. His big brown eyes still were fixed against Case. George grew bolder. "What's the difference now, anyway, who wins?" he ended.

Then Fred's lips opened. "Beat it," he snapped out, his voice very low. "Beat it!"

Myron, Porky, and Johnny Hayes came by at this moment; and, as Fate would have it, did not see Fred; so passed him without speaking.

All of Fred's pent-up feelings arose once more.

"George!" he called. Case turned back. "Come here!" Case walked up to him. "I'm sorry for what I just said."

George Case grinned from ear to ear.

Signal practice was well done that afternoon; the team, despite all the excitement of the past few days, was on its toes.

"Remember, fellows," cautioned Monty as all gathered about him for a last word before they

left the field: "Lots of good sleep to-night; don't eat too much; don't worry about anything; and to-morrow we'll make Graylock mighty glad this is our last game. Lick 'em, fellows, that's the only thing to think about; lick 'em! Fred, have you anything you want to say?"

"You've said 'most all, Monty," smiled Fred in his old way. "We'll give 'em more and repeat to-morrow, fellows. That's what let's do. Is it O. K.?"

"You bet!" the entire team agreed.

Fred's eye caught Myron's. "You're going to have something to do to-morrow, too, old-timer. You and Porky sure are working passes fine."

Myron laughed happily. "Thanks, Fred."

Every man in football togs felt a load lifted as he heard those two speak as friends again: not that there had been any open break since the fight; nevertheless a terrible fear had been on the team; and, though no player had mentioned it, the affair at the power-house and Fred's part or lack of part in it had not added to any one's comfort. Yes, the boys expected more of courage and fairness from Fred because of his prominence and athletic ability than from most others, with the possible exception of Myron.

THE GRAYLOCK GAME 127

The actual playing of football is one of the best cures for grouches known to man; hence Fred Barclay went to bed that night with a brand-new thought for the next day's game.

“Ray! Ray! Ray!
Siss! Siss! Siss!
C. M. S.! C. M. S.! C. M. S.!
Chatham! Chatham! Chatham!
The team! The team! The team!”

Chatham warriors trotted into the field. It was three o'clock in the afternoon of the next day: to be exact, it was Saturday, October sixth. The whole cadet corps was lined up on the west side of the campus and cheered the team with all the volume of its one hundred-and-odd lung power.

“Barclay! Richards! Taylor! Angus!” they yelled as the team lined up on the south end of the field and ran through a play or two. The Graylock Academy team of heavy players was already on the north end of the campus passing the ball swiftly among themselves.

“Here's to dear old Chatham,
The School that we all love!
At 'em! At 'em! At 'em!
The ——”

Johnny Hayes in front of his schoolmates bawled out the old song; stumbled over the words; shut up in confusion midst the howls of derision from the pitiless multitude.

"Learn 'em! Learn 'em! Learn 'em, Jawn, before you spout 'em!" cried a shrill voice.

"Aw, dry up!" laughed Johnny with the thorough knowledge that the joke was on him. Johnny could get no one now to join him in song.

"Here they go!"

The teams were lining up for play now. It was Chatham's kick-off. Graylock was defending the north goal.

"Ray! Ray! Ray!
Siss! Siss! Siss!
C. M. S.! C. M. S.! C. M. S.!
Chatham! Chatham! Chatham!"

and from across the field slapped back the answer:

"Rickety ex! Coex! Coex!
Rickety ex! Rickety ex! Rickety ex!
Graylock! Graylock! Graylock!
The team! The team! The team!"

Fifty men shouted sturdily their defiance,

though their cry was an adaptation from a Yale yell of ancient vintage.

Then came silence. Fred Barclay was ready to kick off. The referee in the center of the field glanced first at one team, then at the other; raised one hand; blew his whistle.

Crack!

Fred Barclay's toe struck the ball; the sphere sailed high and far; was caught by Graylock's left guard on the ten-yard line. But Myron Angus was on him. Myron dived, struck his man square at the knees and downed him before he could take a step.

"Wow! Yow!"

"Forty-six! Eighteen! Six!" Graylock's quarter barked the signal for a line smash.

Chatham held. Another smash came between left guard and center. Again Chatham held. An end run far outside of Myron followed on the instant. But Myron was through; and nailed the runner before two yards had been made.

Graylock's full-back now dropped back for a kick. Whack! The ball sailed high. Richards A got it; dodged; darted; was downed on the twenty-yard line after carrying the ball back a good ten yards.

"Line up quick, fellows!" yelled Fred.

"Sixty-eight! Seventy-two! One!—Go!" called out Schoharie at quarter back.

Porky Taylor, plowing forward like a bull, gained five yards through a hole between right tackle and right end which was made by Billy Blake and Myron Angus. Porky trotted back to his place with a grin on his face.

"Over we go!" yelled Schoharie: a signal to be used once only in a game. The ball flew swift and true to Fred Barclay at full-back. Fred, on the run, got it against his stomach; shot forward as though from a cannon: Richards A and Porky were his interference. He skirted left end; Porky bowled over an oncoming Graylock half; Richards accounted for another. Fred was free with only his opponents' full-back between him and a touchdown!

"Yow! Wow!"

"Aaay! Aaay!" shouted the cadets deliriously as they danced up and down. Fred flew on, a weaving, beautiful, low runner.

Now! Graylock's full-back dived for him. Fred turned his right hip in toward the tackler; tossed him off; whirled around himself; was away again.

“Oh! Oh! Oh!”

“Touchdown! Touchdown! Touchdown!”
yelled Chatham.

Fred was across the magic line; carried the ball to a point directly between the goal-posts.

Chatham hats flew high. Cadets hugged and pounded one another.

And Johnny standing in front of the line once more, his arms waving up and down yelled: “A C. M. S., fellows! A C. M. S.! with a Barclay on the end of it! One! two! three!”

And was it given! It certainly was: with resounding vim!

“Ray! Ray! Ray!
Siss! Siss! Siss!
C. M. S.! C. M. S.! C. M. S.!
Barclay! Barclay! Barclay!
Fred, old Boy!”

Six to nothing!

Richards A kicked the goal.

Seven then to nothing!

“Wow!”

A forward pass was the next thing as soon as Chatham again got the ball: Porky to Myron. And oh, what a beauty it was! Myron gained eighteen yards!

The half ended Chatham 21; Graylock 0.

Never was there a better first half anywhere. For that matter never was there a better game anywhere. The school, though somewhat lighter than Graylock, was out for vengeance and it was taking it.

The last game forever! Then it would be a star and something to remember!

The third quarter was over with the score 34 to 0.

"Jiminy Crickets!"

"O boy! O boy!"

An odd thing now took place: no one understood it at the moment and only a few have understood it since.

Barclay whispered to Schoharie: "Nothing but forward passes now for the rest of the game," he ordered. "Porky to Myron varying once in a while, just to fool 'em; Richards to old Clay; or me to Clay."

"Are you crazy?" came back the Silent Man.

"No. We've got the game won; haven't we?"

"Sure."

"Then do what I tell you."

And Sco did.

Never before had been seen anything like it!

Schoharie varied them once in a while, "just to fool 'em," as ordered. But it was Porky to Myron most of the time. And how that Porcupine did pass! Swift and low; then high and with a drop to them! And Myron grabbed them each time without fail; and shot away from that Graylock team like a scared deer.

If delirium in the first three quarters had raged amongst the cadets on the west side lines, a permanent collective insanity seemed to have set in during the last quarter. The Chatham men danced and yelled and pounded one another; and laughed and even wept through sheer happiness and exhaustion. Graylock was simply swamped.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!"

It is the last one minute of play! Porky has passed again. Myron once more is on the wing.

Another touchdown! The third for that last quarter! And every one of them from Porky's hand and Myron's feet!

The final score! It's a shame almost to tell it: it was 55 to 0!

Yes: football ended in a sky of glory—good enough to satisfy all.

"Taylor! Taylor! Taylor!" shrieked the

cadets as the final blast came from the referee's whistle.

“Angus! Angus! Angus!
Myron, old boy!”

“Oh! Wow!” Johnny Hayes' tears of joy actually came as he helped put Myron onto the shoulders of the mob which carried him off the field with every one yelling, “Oh! Wow!”

“Angus! Angus! Angus!
Myron, old boy!”

Fred received cheers, too, as he walked alone toward the showers. But he waved them all to silence with a magnanimous smile and toss of his arms.

“A funny gink,” thought Schoharie the Silent that night in the hallway near the library as he scratched his head. “I never saw him play better. He's the best football captain this school ever had. Hey you; come here!” he called out suddenly as Barclay appeared in the doorway. “I want to shake your mitt!”

CHAPTER XI

TO FATTY WILLIAMS' ALCOVE

"THINK of a team with halves like Richards A and Porky Taylor!"

"You bet and an end like old Myron Angus and a full-back like Fred Barclay!"

"No wonder we trimmed 'em!"

Such generally was the final conclusion.

But as to that last quarter. Well, it was most frequently discussed like this: "I don't understand Fred, though, running all those forward passes from Porky to Myron."

"Why not? Fred had the game won; and he just wanted to wind up football right. So he let poor old Graylock have the works!"

"I guess that's it, all right."

But a few cadets held to other viewpoints.

"Don't be an idiot, Jim," declared George Case to Tibbotts. "Old House is divided against itself like the house in the Bible Old Hank tells us about. Fred wanted to win the game; and after that he wanted to even up with Angus."

"What you really think then," broke in Tib-

botts, "is that Fred figured if he called for enough forward passes Angus would fall down badly."

"Certainly," replied George. "Fred figured both Porky and Myron would fall down. But the trouble is Fred is dumb; or he might have known, even if he doesn't like 'em, that Porky and Myron are good."

"Sure he might have," agreed Tibbotts.

Exactly the opposite view was taken by Schoharie the Silent; while Johnny Hayes held an opinion about half-way between Case and the Silent Man. Schoharie explained slowly and quietly to Johnny the night after the game that Fred called for those passes just to make up for the fight Fred and Myron had had; and to let Myron be shown to the entire corps as one of the best ends who ever had played on the Chatham field. "It was one of the biggest and most generous acts I've ever seen, John," declared Schoharie. "And Fred Barclay, no matter what his faults are, was a peach to do it."

"Maybe you're right, Silent," responded John. "But I kind of think Fred was smart. I like Fred, too, pretty well at that. But this is what I think: he knew we had the game won, all right.

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He called for the passes. He figured that if Porky or Myron should fail he, at least, would be a big man for having given them their chance; while if Myron and Porky should make good, Fred still would be a big man for giving such opportunities to Myron; and he'd be a great football captain to boot."

Schoharie's thin lips broke into a fleeting smile. "Pretty good dome you've got, Jawn," he responded, "though I don't agree with you."

Thus football and the forward passes in the Graylock game went into history.

Fred and Myron outwardly were very decent to each other after this; each actually tried hard to be nice to the other all the time; yet each in his own heart felt himself very deeply hurt by the other; and this, coupled with conflicting ambitions for the spring and early summer, kept up a constant strain between them.

Myron plunged into studies, military work, and light practice in the Gym for the far-off Top-Men Contest which would determine the team to represent Chatham in the Single Combats with St. James Durham in June; and he spent his spare time almost constantly with his Old House chums.

Fred Barclay worked as hard as Myron did, and in the same things; but, unlike Myron, he soon began to spend his spare time not with Old House men but with George Case, Richards A, Tibbotts, and many others of Lovering Hall. Fred, too, appeared very happy after the Graylock game; for unquestionably his unpopularity occasioned by his attitude toward the abolition of football was vastly lessened by the victory over Graylock.

Fred's change in companions was noticeable almost immediately after the football season closed; and soon it was taken for granted that he would rather be with Lovering Hall men than his own crowd. It was true that he still always came to Old House meetings and seemed interested in the fellows and all the proceedings; but after the meetings were over he returned at once to his friends of Lovering Hall.

"Say, Freddy, what's biting you?" said Porky one day to him. "Aren't Old House fellows good enough for you any more?"

"Sure they are," replied Fred as he whacked his fist playfully against Porky's massive chest. "But a man can go with other guys if he wants to once in a while; can't he?"

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Porky assumed deep thought; then grinned until his ruddy face shone. "The fellows are feeling pretty sorry just the same, Freddy," he answered; "and so am I."

"Some things can't be helped," returned Fred enigmatically.

"Aw, come on, Freddy, be the way you used to—for me, your uncle Porky," pleaded the Porcupine impulsively.

It was no use, however.

Just before Christmas vacation, Fatty Williams was taken into Old House; and at about the same time the performance of Johnny Hayes' show, "The Hero's Revenge," was for some reason postponed to an indefinite date in the far-off future.

Then the winter came and spring swept by; and now the early summer had arrived. The loss of football long since had gone by the stage of bitter hurt; besides the magnificence of the game's exit had made up greatly for the sorrow of its going.

It was May. The cadet corps was concerned primarily with the impending Military and Single Combat Tournament with St. James Durham two weeks away, and the choice of the

Senior Captain for next year, which would be made at about the same date.

On Sunday morning, May 19th, right after Chapel, a crowd of cadets were on the green lawn in front of the main building, ready for whatever might happen.

"Let me stand on your shoulders, Myron," called out Porky Taylor, with a grin of anticipated joy. "Then you straighten out your arms and let Fatty and Silent swing from each one of 'em. See if you can hold us! I want to find out if you're in good condition."

"All right," answered Myron as he whipped off his cadet blouse and tossed it on the grass. Then he spread his legs wide and locked his hands in front of him. "Stick your foot in my hands, Pork, and hop up."

Porky caught Myron by the back of the head; hopped; and in no time was balancing his sturdy form on the top of Myron's broad shoulders. "Easy there now, Porky," cried Myron; and extended his arms. "Come on, Sco. Come on, Fat!"

Schoharie the Silent and Fatty Williams each seized one of Myron's arms between the shoulder and elbow and lifted himself off the ground as

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though he were "chinning" a horizontal bar in the Gym.

Myron's body wobbled a second under the great weight; Porky balanced uncertainly a moment; and Schoharie and Fatty swung. Then all was well: Myron held them.

"Atta boy! Fine!" applauded Johnny Hayes. "Hey, fellows, here!" he yelled to a crowd of boys a dozen yards off who promptly came up on the run.

"Good boy, Myron!" cried out Richards A.

"Fine!" declared Tibbotts. "Steady there, Porky!"

"Hold it, Myron!" cautioned Fred Barclay.

"Stand still there, Porky—you leatherhead!" cried out Case.

"'Nuff! 'Nuff!" Porky finally called from his perch.

"Wait a second," answered Myron. "Sco, you and Fat get down together. Easy now. One! two! down!"

The Silent Man and Fatty let their feet reach the ground gently. Porky leaped off Myron's shoulders and landed a couple of yards away.

"How's that, boys?" laughed the Porcupine proudly. "Old Samson here! The strongest

man in the world; and his three classy assistants! Step up and get your tickets, ladies and gentlemen!"

"It was a great exhibition of strength and training, all right," offered Fred Barclay.

"I don't know about the boxing, Myron," confided Johnny Hayes a few minutes later; "but I'll bet you'll win in the Gym work and at wrestling in the Top-Men Contest. Neither Richards nor Porky is in your class. And I honestly don't think Fred is, any more."

"Cuckoo!" exclaimed Myron with a quiet laugh. "You're getting dizzy from the heat, Jawn!"

"I may be cuckoo and dizzy with the heat, old sport," murmured Johnny with a laugh as he and Myron started slowly toward the Armory. "But a week from next Tuesday is the Top-Men Contest; and I'll bet my old shoes and shirts and hats you win at least two out of the three events then. You're in fine trim," Johnny ended as they stopped in the Armory doorway.

"Fred's been training, too," commented Myron.

"That's all right," returned Johnny. "Just you keep on plugging, and you'll not only come out of the Top-Men Contest with flying colors

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but you'll trim up St. James proper; and then the Senior Captaincy is yours, hands down. You'll see."

"You're a good-enough egg, Jawn," laughed Myron as he handed his chum a swift poke in the ribs. "But they're going to lock you up in the Daffy Home if you keep on."

For answer, John H. Hayes opened his big mouth wide and a grin spread over his long, red face. "Maybe so; maybe so," came from him. "But now I would speak to thee on a matter of grand import: I think it a noble idea to put Fatty Williams out of business at Inspection this afternoon. Want to be in on it?"

"I do not," chuckled Myron instantly.

"Why not?"

"Because I'm not entirely dumb yet. Didn't Fatty nearly amputate your left tonsil last fall with a siphon of soda just because you rode him on a rail?"

"What's that to do with this?" John H. Hayes didn't like Myron's reference a bit.

"To do with it!" demanded Myron without mercy. "Isn't the School Dance next Saturday night?"

"Yes," admitted Johnny.

"You and I are going to take girls; aren't we?"

Again Johnny admitted an important truth.

"Well, Fatty isn't. And if he isn't and I am, I'm not going to give Fatty any cause for evening up scores with me on that night."

Johnny speculated a moment but answered bravely, "I'll take a chance against that old Fat any day."

"Go to it then," Myron laughed. "And, Captain Potter, smite him hip and thigh. But smite him alone. As for me—I admit I'm skeered!"

"Porky! Oh, Porky!" yelled Johnny as he turned back toward the lawn immediately that Myron disappeared into the depths of the Armory. "Come on here a sec!"

"What do you want?" asked Porky, approaching Johnny with a grin.

Johnny explained at once a secret scheme against the unsuspecting Fatty Williams which was to be put into effect forthwith; while the May sun sparkled on his own blond head and seemed actually to dance amongst the tow bristles on the top of Porky's round dome.

"Did you hear about the swipings that have been going on, though, Johnny?" whispered

Porky as the two hurried quickly upward to Fat's alcove in Dormitory H. "A lot of fellows have been having money swiped from them."

"The deuce you say! Who?"

"Case has lost a lot. He was just telling about it," went on Porky. "He says he thinks it's that poor little fish of a Thomas Hiller who's been taking it."

"Do you believe him?" asked Johnny.

"Don't know," replied Porky. "He's an awful liar; isn't he?"

"Sure is," said Johnny.

"Hardly think he'd accuse a fellow of that, though, unless he's really lost it. Do you? Honest, now?"

"Might," returned the icy Johnny. "Wouldn't put much by Case if he wanted anything."

"What do you think he'd want?"

"Don't know. That little Hiller kid is a queer nut."

"He sure is that," agreed the Porcupine. "Case says Hiller has been bringing him and Tibbotts and Richards a lot of chocolates and gum out of slot-machines lately. The kid's been sneaking off bounds when he couldn't get permission and skipping down-town."

"Has Case reported his big losses yet?" inquired the skeptical Johnny.

"Don't think so," answered Porky. "He says he wants to catch the man first, or at least make sure of him."

"Don't believe he lost any, then," concluded Johnny. "But I just happened to think, Porky, that kid Hiller brought Myron a bunch of gum a few days ago and another bunch this morning. Myron told me about it. Money-swiping never entered my head; but I did think for a second that Hiller might have been up to lead-slug work again. You know, I shouldn't be surprised if he really did do the things they said about him when he first came."

They now reached the doorway of Dormitory H wherein dwelled Fatty. It was noontime; the Dormitory was empty.

"Aha, me trusty," breathed Johnny, "luck is with us!"

And with broad grins on their pious-looking faces they tiptoed into the Dormitory.

CHAPTER XII

TROUSERS AND TOES

“AHA!” breathed Porky with a chuckle, “let’s to the dirty work!” He stopped short; turned to Johnny; inflated his chest. “Take a swat at that, thou slave!” he suddenly commanded, his blue eyes dancing. “Take a swat!” And, Johnny not complying with sufficient speed, was bumped promptly all over the Dormitory.

“Quit it! Quit it! you big goat!” appealed Johnny. “We’re on serious business; and the enemy is Fatty, not me!”

“Coward!” snorted Porky, but desisted. “Are you sure Fatty has on his old pants?”

“I saw ’em; and he’s got to change ’em for Inspection,” said Johnny.

Every Sunday afternoon at three o’clock an inspection of military equipment was held in the Armory; after which, with rifles put away in their racks on the sides of the wall, the cadets were put through a short drill in the setting-up exercises.

Johnny Hayes desired revenge upon Fatty, not because of the crimes Fatty had committed against him, but rather because vengeance upon Fatty was considered by Johnny as his own private possession. Didn't he think Fatty was one of the finest fellows in the world? And really wasn't Fatty one of them? And hadn't he, John H. Hayes, put Fat into Old House? What better rights could any one have for playing a joke on him? Besides, there was always, away back in Johnny's brain, the remembrance of that splash of soda-water against his left tonsil, as Myron had so rudely put it; though, in all justice, it should be noted that when Johnny hunted for personal justification, this was always the last reason to come up.

Now Fatty Williams' cadet dress-pants fitted Fatty with a perfection of nearness. Fatty was so built that his pants just naturally would be tight. At Chatham on Sunday the boys did the setting-up exercises with dress-coats off and neatly folded at their feet; and went through the drill in clean white shirts, their trousers held up by tightly buckled belts.

One of the setting-up exercises was to lock thumbs with arms extended above the head, then

swing forward and touch finger-tips to the floor without bending the knees.

This exercise, viewed from the rear, depended for its sanctity upon the stoutness of the rear seam in cadet pants.

Well aware of this and of his own expansiveness, Fatty Williams always had seen to it that the rear seams in his particular pants were stout indeed. And both John H. Hayes and Porky Taylor knew of Fatty's secret care.

"Let me labor well this merry day," murmured Johnny as he reached Fat's alcove and opened the blade of his jackknife.

"Here they are, Jawn!" whispered Porky as he took from a hook in the closet a neatly pressed pair of gray trousers.

"We won't slit all the seam," said Johnny. "Fat might get on to it."

"No; let's just slit enough," chortled Porky. "O man! O boy!"

Thus the deed was done.

At three o'clock the bugler sounded "assembly" and the battalion fell into line. One hundred and twenty men in double rank stood as stiff as ramrods. Their tightly fitting gray dress-coats were studded with shining round brass but-

tons on their high collars, broad chests, and short swallow-tails. And the boys were as stiff as they looked, too: with their closely visored cadet caps, every man at attention, his right white-gloved hand holding a rifle tight to the body and next to the white, brass-buckled belt, his left hand barely touching a black-leather bayonet scabbard.

The inspection was over quickly. Rifles and belts were put back into the rifle racks. Then Senior Captain Atkins W took command in place of the Commandant to put the men through the setting-up exercises. Captain Atkins stood in the rear of the line. Dress-coats were instantly in neat piles at cadet feet. A command rang out: over swung the men to touch their finger-tips to the floor without bending a knee, when suddenly there came an ominous sound: "Rip! Zip!"

"Ooh! Ooh!" groaned Fatty with an instinctive knowledge of the calamity and the cause. "Ooh!" Fatty then waited without moving for the axe of discipline to land on him.

"Zowie!" murmured Porky under his breath.

"What's up, little one?" thought Johnny.

"Private Williams, fall out!" thundered Cap-

tain Atkins W. "And take ten demerits. Your pants are a wreck!"

Except that Sergeant Myron Angus again chanced to be acting temporarily as Sergeant of the Guard that night and that Fatty Williams and Richards A lived in Dormitory H on the top floor and at the east end of the main building, and that Johnny and Porky lived in Dormitory E on the same floor at the west end of the main building, nothing of great importance might have followed the splitting of Fatty's trousers.

But Fatty swore immediate death and destruction to his two chums. He had noted with suspicion that morning, anyway, the sudden disappearance into the school building of Johnny and Porky immediately after the gymnastics on the lawn of Myron, Porky, and himself.

"You two guys think you're funny; don't you?" he declared when the inspection was over.

And the manner in which Johnny exploded: "Haw Haw!" and Porky chuckled and butted him with his shoulder convinced Fat beyond doubt that the guilty pair were before him.

So that night long after "taps," Fatty slipped down the hall to Dormitory E; and carried with him a long piece of twine, both ends of which

were fastened into slip-knots and to the center of which were tied two tomato-cans about an inch apart. Fatty also carried a broom with him.

Both Johnny and Porky, as became two healthy boys, were sound, sound sleepers. Fat tiptoed to his work. The night was hot. On the iron military cots of both John and Porky the top sheets lay loosely, especially around the sleepers' feet. Porky's big toe even showed clearly in the moonlight. Fat placed the noose of the slip-knot of his long piece of twine over that big toe and drew it gently to tightness. With twine in hand, but held so lightly that it would not awake the sleeper, Fatty then stepped quickly and with much care to the foot of Johnny's bed, two alcoves away. Johnny still lay at peace.

Fatty raised the sheet cautiously from one of Johnny's feet and adjusted the slip-knot on the other end of his twine to Johnny's right big toe. He pulled it taut, slowly, gently, as he had done with Porky. The tomato-cans tied to the middle of the twine, Fatty now placed on the dormitory floor midway between the alcoves of his victims. "Now you dogs of the palefaces," thought Fat, "take your medicine!"

Whereat from the foot of Johnny's cot Fat took his broom and drew the bristles of it across John's upper lip and under his nose.

John sniffled: "Whew!" Fat brought the bristles back the opposite way.

"Phooow!" blew Johnny now only partially awake.

Fatty poked the broom against John's nostrils.

"Ooh!" bawled Johnny suddenly. Fatty poked harder.

"Get out of here!" And Johnny with a roar was up.

But Fat stood his ground a moment longer. He batted Johnny over the head. "Dog of the palefaces!" he thundered. "Die where you are in your bed!" Then ran as though his life depended on it; and took his broom with him, not wishing to leave any evidence.

Well, Johnny gave chase. And right there is where the real trouble occurred. "Oou! Wow!" he yelled and came to a quick stop. "My toe! My toe!"

"Holy sweet cats!" bawled Porky suddenly as he awoke in the alcove beyond. "Oh! Oh! Oh! My toe! My toe!"

The tomato-cans rattled and rang as the two

big toes pulled in opposite directions. The whole Dormitory now was awake and in an uproar.

“Lay off me! You—you big gook!” thundered Porky in righteous rage. “If you’re doing that, Johnny, I’ll—murder you!”

“Doing what?” bellowed back Johnny. “Hey, quit it, you crazy nut! Oh, my toe! My toe!” And Johnny danced around on one foot at one end of Dormitory E as Porky danced around on one foot at the other end. And both yelled and cried in pain and distress; and every time they danced, their toes hurt more. And the tomato-cans rattled and the fellows around them roared.

Finally, just as Porky made a great leap for Johnny, his wrath beyond him, the electric light was switched on; and in the doorway stood Myron Angus, the Sergeant of the Guard.

“My toe’s broken!” thundered Porky.

“Mine is, too!” cried Johnny.

The gang looked on and laughed wickedly; for there the two of them stood tied together by the big toes with a couple of plebeian tomato-cans between them.

Now entered Richards A in pajamas. He was grinning and silent, his black hair smooth and shining, and he stood behind Angus.

"Get back to your bunks right off," ordered Myron quietly. "And as to you two, Taylor and Hayes, unhorse your toe-lines quickly and don't let me hear any more out of you."

Porky squatted on the dormitory floor and struggled over the twine. "I can't get it off, sir," said he with a laugh.

"Get down there and help him, Richards," ordered Myron. "What are you doing out of your alcove, anyway?"

"Thought there was a murder, sir," responded Richards A innocently. "Heard you rush by, sir; didn't know it was you; ran into your alcove to see what had happened; found you gone, sir. That's all, sir."

"So you came here to pick up the bodies," put in Myron with a grin. "Is that it?"

"Yes, sir," replied Richards.

"Fix up Porky's—I mean Taylor W's—toe; then beat it back to your hole and be quick about it."

"Yes, sir."

Myron cut the toe-line with his jackknife, thus separating the two victims.

All the cadets went back to their alcoves now, save Porky and Richards. Myron stood over this

pair a moment; then walked into Johnny's alcove.

As Myron disappeared Richards A whispered to Porky: "I swiped enough slot-machine chocolate out of Myron's alcove when I was in there just now to start a store. When he goes to bed, come in and we'll have a feast."

Porky seemed suddenly to turn cold. "You got that in Myron's alcove?" he asked scarce above his breath.

"Sure I did. Aren't you on?"

"No," whispered Porky. "I don't know what you mean."

"What you trying to do, Pork, kid me?"

"No," repeated Porky, now almost in terror. "No."

Porky held his own counsel after that, and held it tight throughout that night; he knew of nothing else to do. He could place his hands on nothing in what Richards had said which actually could hurt Myron. Yet a fear was on Porky for Myron, a very real fear in which lead slugs and that squint-eyed new cadet, Thomas Hiller, and the whole Lovering Hall gang were hopelessly mixed up. Besides, Fred Barclay was now with Case and his crowd all the time; and Fred

Barclay was a dumb-bell (Porky was at last ready to admit that); and they'd work Fred against Myron. And what was Myron doing, anyway, taking all that chocolate from Hiller? Myron was in training. Porky stood the strain throughout the next morning; then he burst with the story and his own feelings to Johnny. It was immediately after dinner. The two boys were on the sidewalk by the horse-block.

"I'm—not sure that Hiller gave that stuff to Myron at all," concluded Johnny as Porky finished.

"Why not?"

"Oh, I don't know. I'm not; that's all. I'm going to ask Myron myself."

"Shucks; that's just the idea!" exclaimed Porky. "Wish I'd thought to do that a long while ago. There's Myron now. Here's our chance to ask him."

"Hiller didn't give me any chocolates at all," answered Myron with a laugh when Johnny had put the question. "Didn't you fellows have enough trouble last night without looking for more now?"

"Richards told Porky that Hiller gave 'em to you," continued John.

“He said,” corrected Porky, “that he himself swiped some from Myron.”

“I didn’t have any to swipe,” said Myron with a smile.

“Then I’m on!” declared Porky.

“The doggone ——” snapped out Johnny.

“Oh, what’s the use!”

Myron’s bright face held a curious, surprised look in it.

CHAPTER XIII

A BLIGHTED BEING

"SAY, fellows, a barge has stuck on a rock about fifty yards above the Falls!" called out Myron as, on the following Saturday, he ran up to Johnny and Porky on the lawn.

"You don't say!" exploded the other two.

"T. J. just got the news," continued Myron. "A couple of men are on her. I'm going to the Falls. Better come along."

"You bet!" answered Porky.

"Sure!" responded Johnny.

"Can I go with you, please, Angus? I've got permission," spoke a little boy who now came up to them.

"All right, Hiller."

Porky and Johnny glanced at each other.

"We'll get permission, too, and be back in a sec," declared Johnny.

As Johnny and Porky started to race away, a decrepit Ford swung around the corner of the main building.

"Going to the Falls?" yelled Myron.

"Yep; jump in," answered the driver. "I got to hustle."

"Oh, fellows!" called Myron after his chums. "Have got a ride. See you there. They'll be taking those men off the barge any time now."

"Sorry I can't take you up where the boat is," said the driver, as they reached the southern part of the city and stopped in front of a drug store. "I have a date the other way."

"I want to go in and get some gum, anyway, Angus, please," put in Hiller. "I'll only be a minute. I know right where the machine is."

Myron followed Hiller into the drug store. The small boy stepped up to the slot-machine; inserted a coin, and pulled out gum.

"I been laying for you boys since last fall!" growled a rough voice suddenly from behind them. "Especially for this little one!"

Little Hiller made no move. Myron swung around and faced the man. "What do you mean, sir?"

"Somebody's been sticking lead slugs in my slot-machine," replied the man, "and I think it's you two."

"Did you put in a lead slug just now, Hiller?"

Myron whirled the little boy around by the shoulders.

“N-no, sir.”

“Honest?”

“H-honest, sir.”

Myron looked squarely at the druggist: “Open your machine then, sir; will you please? That’s only fair.”

“All right,” replied the druggist. But when he had done so, not a lead slug was found.

“There you are, sir!” declared Myron.

“Humph!” grunted the man, somewhat embarrassed. “Something’s wrong here, just the same.”

“Something is,” replied Myron. “But don’t try that again, if you please.”

The barge still was stuck on a rock near the brink when Thomas Hiller and Myron Angus reached the river. It had broken away from its moorings two miles to the southward, and the current had carried it to its position almost over the Falls. People were everywhere along the bank. From the second story of a building at the water’s edge men from the life-saving station had shot a line to the barge. The marooned men had made it fast to a stanchion. A basket had

been run out on this line to take the men off. One man now got into the basket and was in process of being hauled back to shore when suddenly something snapped; the basket shivered in mid air; then dropped into the raging river below. But its occupant was quick as a panther; he reached for the wire; threw a leg over it; and was safe for the time being.

Porky and Johnny had now come up; and they stood with Myron and Hiller.

"That guy'll never get back to shore on that wire," murmured Johnny. "I can tell by the look in his face."

"You're right," replied Porky. "What do you think, Myron?"

Both turned to their chum; but Myron no longer was at their side.

"Thanks, boy; but I can do it myself all right," a life-saver in the building from which the line had been shot was saying a few moments later. "I'll crawl out and bring him in. I've done jobs like that lots of times."

"I'd just as soon, sir, if you want me to," answered Myron, his voice very low. "I've been practising a lot lately in Gym work."

A number of people including Porky and

Johnny had followed Myron as he rushed into the building; and among them was the drug-store keeper.

"Who is that boy?" the owner of the drug store demanded.

"He's the man who saved the life of one of our fellows at the power-house last fall. That's who he is, sir," Johnny Hayes spoke up, his voice shaking.

"And he's the best man I know, too!" put in Porky.

"Well, I'll be hanged!" ejaculated the druggist as he peered at Myron. "That was the first day, too, when that little kid who's with him came into my store!"

"Hello, fellows!" greeted Myron quietly as he turned away from the life-saver to his two chums. "Let's stick around until they get those men ashore. Then we'd better hustle for school. Say, do you realize that there's going to be a dance to-night?"

"Porky remembers, all right," answered Johnny. "No doubt about that. He's going to have a girl."

"So are you, Jawn," replied Porky. "What you kicking about?"

"Well, I'm going to take one, too," laughed Myron. "I wish those guys would hurry up. I want to see the end of this."

The boys went out again to the river bank; and there watched the life-saver as he pushed a new basket in front of him and crawled out over the line toward the man who still hung desperately to his position high above the dangerous river.

It was but the work of a short time, however, before the rescue was completed. Then the basket was run out once more on its small trolley-wheel over the wire to the barge; and the second man was brought ashore.

"I wouldn't like a life-saver's job," announced Johnny as Porky, Myron, little Hiller, and he reached school some time later, "not for John H. Hayes!"

"You may need one, though, before this night is over," replied Myron; "only about three-quarters of our men are looking out for girls to-night, I hear; and not more than half of Lovering Hall are doing it."

"That's a funny note!" shot back Porky. "Who told you that?"

"Fred told me," responded Myron. "He isn't

looking out for any girl, and neither is Fatty nor Case nor Tibbotts nor Richards A."

"Oou, Jiminy!" exclaimed Porky and grinned as he pretended to shiver.

"You'd better say 'Oou,' " chimed in Johnny with the hope in his heart that if trouble arose, both Porky and Myron would "land" into part of it also.

Trouble did arise. Since last Christmas vacation Johnny had stored in his breast soft thoughts of a black-eyed young lady from Buffalo, by name, Beulah Davis; and he had invited her to attend the dance; Porky expected a pretty damsel from Niagara, named Ida Lansing, who recently had battered up fairly well his stoutly encased heart; and Myron was to look after a tall brunette from Lockport: Miss Edith Swan.

Johnny's mistake took place at seven-fifteen that evening. The girls had just arrived and were "prinking" in Bingo's study, which overlooked the walk from the first floor of the main building. As an aid in the preparation for the St. James Tournament, Captain Atkins, a few days before, had given Johnny the duty of perfecting in military drill some of last fall's new cadets. Nothing ever suited Johnny more.

Johnny was a private; and Atkins W had assigned him temporarily the work of a Corporal. Johnny had drilled those new lads until they could scarcely stand or see. Now he proposed to avail himself of a perquisite of his job. He rounded up an even half-dozen of his victims. "Go get your belts and rifles, you guys!" he commanded gruffly. "It's only a week till we meet St. James. We're going to have a drill."

Some hesitated.

"Get a move on you!" thundered Johnny.

No more was necessary. In no time Johnny had his squad together with rifles on their shoulders and himself at their head.

"What you doing?" yelled Porky.

Johnny paid him no attention. "Squad!" cried out Johnny. "Forward!—March!"

Forward they marched: down the broad gravel driveway before the main building until they reached Bingo's study. Then Johnny swung them, squad front, directly under Bingo's window. "Squad!—Halt!" he sang out.

With a click of feet and a bang of rifle butts to the ground the squad obeyed. Johnny never batted an eye, much less glanced up toward the window. "Right shoulder!—Arms!" he ordered.

Click! Click! Click! the squad responded.

“Order!—Arms!”

Click! Click! Click!

In Bingo’s window now were three feminine faces.

“Port!—Arms!” roared Johnny.

Whereat several young gentlemen who now stood behind Johnny’s men, looked up at Bingo’s window and roared, louder than had Johnny with his orders.

It is a dangerous thing in a military school, however, to guy an honest cadet when he is drilling a squad. It simply isn’t done.

So, after one roar, the roarers were quite ashamed of themselves, hurried away toward the Armory, and left the field to Johnny and his squad.

“Oh, that was just lovely of you, John, to let us see that drill,” murmured Beulah as Johnny stood before her in the hall a few minutes later.

“Do you always drill them?”

“Oh, generally,” answered Johnny. “Pretty good, eh?”

“Wonderful!” cooed Beulah.

“Hey, you!” offered Porky when Beulah had retired once more to Bingo’s study, “I think

you need a guardian!" Porky had been eyeing Johnny from the library.

"What's the matter?" asked Johnny as he ran a long red hand over his long blond hair. "I didn't do anything."

"No!" withered Porky who now stood close to his chum in the doorway under the *Carpe Diem* clock. "You didn't do anything! You didn't start anything, either! Showing off like that! You blithering idiot!"

"I wasn't showing off," protested the fairly disturbed Johnny. "I wasn't, Pork; honest."

"Porky!" gurgled the Porcupine with deep menace.

"Porky!" repeated Johnny.

"I don't suppose you saw that gang behind your squad; did you? Fatty and Fred and Case and Tibbotts and Richards? And I don't suppose they saw those girls in Bingo's windows; did they? And I don't suppose they knew what you were up to either—you poor, slim-faced, cuckoo-eared skate!"

"What's the trouble, Pork?"

"Porky!"

Johnny swallowed. "Porky, I mean."

"Trouble!" scathed Porky. "If there is any

trouble, your pusillanimous life is over! Remember!"—and Porky's blue eyes twinkled dangerously—"Myron and me, also, are looking after girls to-night!"

"Me are; are me?" mentioned Johnny.

"Get out!" roared the Porcupine.

And Johnny obeyed.

The Chatham Armory that night was festooned gaily with flags, and red, white, and blue bunting. By eight-thirty the cadet band was playing ragtime of the very latest adaptation from music of older, if not better, days. Already cadets in dress uniforms alight with shining brass buttons had started to dance with prettily attired partners. Fifty couples at least were on the floor. The east doorway was crowded with others who chatted and laughed in pleasant, careless fashion.

"Where's that Johnny?" inquired Myron as he came into the doorway with Edith Swan.

"Don't know and don't care," responded Porky as he grinned possessively into the bright brown eyes of Miss Lansing at his side.

"Beulah was waiting for him, Myron, a little while ago, up near the library," offered Ida Lansing.

A long stairway in the hall outside this entrance to the Armory led to Downing Hall above.

A commotion at the top of the stairs now caused all heads to turn upward with a common impulse.

"Look at it!" ejaculated Porky with a groan.
"Oh, look at it!"

And there was Johnny in pants and dancing-pumps but with no cadet dress coat and no shirt save a B. V. D. There he was, his body and legs dangling over the banister at the top of the stairs, while a gang of masked cadets lowered him slowly by a rope under his arms down among the cadets and girls who now crowded into the hallway.

"Wow! Wow!"

"Oh, Jawn, there!" Everybody yelled and laughed.

Dancing stopped on the instant. The band ceased playing. And Johnny, tossing and struggling, was finally landed safely in the middle of the jeering crowd. Once on his feet, however, he made a mad rush through the press and escaped up the front stairs to the library, where he flopped into a chair, exhausted through shame and utter sadness.

“Never mind, Johnny,” soothed Beulah Davis softly as she stood smiling gently upon his bare arms and B. V. D. shirt. “You couldn’t help it if they kidnapped you. Where’s your coat?”

Johnny placed his elbows on his knees and his head in his hands. “Don’t know where it is,” he moaned. “I’ll never need a coat again.”

“What’s the matter, old fellow?” Johnny turned a woe-begone face up to the genial Commandant who at that moment entered the room.

“Nothing, sir; nothing’s the matter,” answered Johnny with another moan. “I may die, sir. I don’t know.”

“You’re just a blighted being; is that it, old man?” chuckled T. J. kindly.

“Yes, sir; that’s it: I guess I’m just a blighted being.”

CHAPTER XIV

SMASHING THE DANCE

“HEY, quit it!”

“Have a heart, you guys!”

Yells both masculine and feminine came from the hall outside the Armory. For as Johnny disappeared, pillows, blankets, and a mattress from a cadet cot landed down upon the heads of girls and boys.

The masked band had done good work.

“You will dance; will you?” gloated a voice from behind a mask.

Myron, Porky, Schoharie, and a dozen fighting men of Old House, of Lovering Hall and of the neutral body bounded up after their enemy three steps at a time.

The big fight took place in the upper hall. But here Bingo nailed them. “Have ‘assembly’ sounded at once, Sergeant Angus!” the C. O. ordered and made an ineffectual grab at a masked head of hair.

“Yow! Wow!” yelled the bandits as they scattered.

"Go back to the Armory!" ordered Bingo to those who remained.

Myron and the other doughty defenders of honor and the fair sex obeyed.

The Bugler sounded "assembly."

"Battalion!—Attention!" It was now T. J.'s commanding voice.

Every cadet in the Armory, whether with or without a dancing partner, jumped into line.

Colonel Crawford, his gray face grave, but his hawk-like eyes taking in everything, stood at Colonel Meadows' elbow. The excitement was so great that no wonderment was felt because of the large number of absentees when the battalion roll was called. During many minutes after "assembly" had sounded, men who were as innocent as newly fallen snow kept drifting into the Armory from all parts of the building; some with girls, others alone. It was a reasonable supposition that many would not have heard the bugle at all; and some, having heard, would not have believed in the truth of it. For was not a dance on? Some one is getting funny, many easily would conclude.

Those masked bandits were well aware of all this, and well did they use the situation for their

own ends. Several of them now approached the open Armory windows cautiously and let fly a half-dozen sofa-pillows, the last of their ammunition, at the soldierly line of cadets which faced them.

The discipline corps endured the attack unmoved.

"Gentlemen," spoke Bingo as the barrage ended, "some people may sleep hard to-night; but some people, before all is finished, I hope will hardly sleep because of the number of lines they may be compelled to learn in a given time."

This helped a lot. A grunt of satisfaction swept over the cadet line. Titters and laughter came from the young ladies throughout the room. The masked bandits at the windows made hasty retreats; and wondered just when the axe would fall on them.

"My apologies go to the ladies," continued Colonel Crawford. "I am sure you men as individuals will supplement these sentiments. Now that the enemy is routed, we'll go on with the dance." The C. O. turned to Colonel Meadows, his lips moving inaudibly.

"Battalion!" cried out T. J. "Dismissed!"

The band struck up immediately; the dance

began again; once more the doorway was crowded.

Soon, however, there appeared, a minute or two apart, several innocent-looking gentlemen, immaculate and trim in their gray dress uniforms, who promptly mingled sociably with the crowd. And they were Cadet Corporal Tibbotts, Cadet Private Fatty Williams, Cadet Lieutenant Fred Barclay, Cadet Second Sergeant Case, and Cadet Corporal Richards A.

“Yah—Yah—Yah. Yah Yah Yah Yah!” burst forth Porky grinning as, with Miss Lansing, he danced by Fred and Fatty. “I hope you guys hardly sleep for a month!”

But neither Fatty nor Fred spoke or changed expression.

Bingo Crawford and T. J. knew pretty well how to handle boys when a tempest was upon them.

“The first thing, sir,” said the latter, with a smile, “is to let the wind die down. That will help some.”

“Right, Colonel Meadows,” replied Bingo in his low voice and in return flashed a quick smile at the Commandant. “Let’s you and me go now and get a dance.” Which may show a lot of

things more or less important, but about which no good can be attained by amplification.

"That was a bum trick, this rough-housing to-night; wasn't it, sir?"

Colonel Crawford turned his head quickly to a boy who had come up to him. It was nearing midnight. Bingo was standing quietly in the Armory watching the dance.

"Was it, Case?" he asked. "Did you have any part in it?"

"No, sir," replied Case.

"Very good," pronounced Bingo.

George grew uncomfortable. "I guess I'll—I'll be going, sir."

"What? To your bunk so soon? The dance won't be over for ten minutes."

"I know, sir; but I guess I'll be going." George felt his cheeks beginning to turn red as he moved away; for he had noticed a slight smile flick across the C. O.'s face just then, and for some reason George felt discomfiture because of that smile.

He hurried up-stairs toward his alcove; and came upon little Hiller in the upper hallway.

Hiller's small fists were clenched tightly as though over something; and at sight of Case the

little boy shoved the fists deep into his trousers pockets.

Case stopped before him. "Pawney up! Give 'em to me!" he ordered in a low tone and glared down bullyingly at Hiller.

"All of 'em, sir?" asked little Hiller. "You took nearly all I had before, sir."

"How many have you got? Let's see 'em! Quick, now!"

Little Hiller tremblingly drew his fists out of the trousers pockets and held them out open, palms up, to the older boy. "That's all I've got, sir."

"Humph!" grunted Case with a shrug of his shoulders. "That's not many. I'll take half of 'em." He reached over and took four or five lead slugs from each of the small boy's palms. "You're a poor, whining little fish; aren't you?" he sneered as he stuck the slugs into his own trousers pocket.

Thomas Hiller blinked behind his spectacles. "You'll never tell on me; will you, Case?" he pleaded.

George laughed under his breath. "Ever used any of these slugs in town except at that drug store?"

"N-no, sir. N-no," replied the little boy.
"But you won't tell on me; will you, sir?"

"No fear," replied Case. "Get out of this hall now, and go back into your dormitory and hop into your bunk!"

"Yes, sir."

Through sheer fright, little Hiller hesitated before moving. George made as if to strike him with his open hand. Thomas Hiller shrank backward.

"Beat it!" spat out George. "Beat it, you puny little liar!"

CHAPTER XV

THE HIGH COURT

“Good-night, Ladies! Good-night, Ladies! Good-night, Lay—dees!
We’re going to leave you now!
Merrily we roll along! roll along! roll along!
Merrily we roll along—we’re going to leave you now!”

So sang the Chatham cadets shortly after midnight as taxis took their loads of girls away.

“Didn’t we hand it to old Johnny, though!” laughed Fred Barclay as he and Myron Angus wandered up-stairs to their beds.

“He deserved it, too!” responded Myron as he threw back his dark head and roared.

They stood a moment together on the second floor at the foot of the stairs which leads up to Dormitory H.

“The school has a tough week in front of it,” commented Fred casually, his brown eyes frankly upon Myron.

“Sure it has.”

“Yes,” continued Fred: “with the St. James

Tournament just a week off and exams coming right after that, we'll all have to step on the gas right lively."

"I should say so," agreed Myron. "T. J. was saying this morning that we'll have to do a lot of drilling all this week, and that St. James is fine in battalion and platoon movements as well as in the manual of arms."

"I know it," said Fred. "I guess it will be drill every spare minute we've got." He paused; then burst out impulsively: "Look here, Myron. You and I are going up against each other, and hard, too. I've said and done a lot of things to you that I'm sorry for. And I want you to know it."

Myron's black eyes looked sharply a moment at his erstwhile friend; then he said: "Oh, that's all right, Fred. No use to be sore at each other just because we're out for the same things."

"That's what I've been thinking lately," declared Fred. "You and I have both been in training and we're both in fine shape. I suppose it's not conceit to say that it will probably be between the two of us in the Top-Men Contest Tuesday."

Myron laughed: "There's many a slip."

"That's all right; but what I said is about true, though; don't you think?"

"Probably," responded Myron. "Porky and Richards—yes, it might be true, Fred."

"Sure it is. And they say it's still between the two of us for Senior Captain next year, Myron. Maybe I'm counting chickens before they're hatched, but I can't help it. What I want to say is that we've both tried hard, and will continue to do so to the end. But let's be friends—if you're willing."

"I'm willing," answered Myron instantly, his honest gaze steady on Fred.

"Well, then, there's my fist on it, old fellow." Fred Barclay held out his big hand.

Whereupon the two gripped each other tightly.

The next day was Sunday. It was another warm, sunshiny day. Immediately after Chapel George Case seated himself on the horse-block in front of the main building. Little Hiller, like a fascinated bird, stood blinking before Case. Suddenly a taxi approached on the winding, pine-lined drive. A man, whose face was only too familiar, was seated in the back. George Case leaped to his feet. Little Hiller felt as if his heart had stopped.

"Great Scott!" gasped George as both bolted toward the Armory. "You get off into the woods somewhere, and don't show up before dinner if you value your life."

"Where—where—are you going, Case?"

"None of your business!" snapped back George as they parted.

The man who had driven up in the taxi went directly into the office of Colonel William B. Crawford.

"I'll look into the matter," concluded the C. O. after ten minutes' conference. "That's the best I can do. You seem very sure of your ground, sir."

"I am," answered the man. "He's come in with a big boy frequently; but I never had a good look at the big one until yesterday. Then I found out his name."

"But I still don't understand your sureness," argued Colonel Crawford; "for you admit you found no slugs when you opened the machine in front of them."

"But don't you see, sir," returned the druggist, "I have found slugs several times before, immediately after those two boys had operated the machine and left the store."

“But are you sure that those two are the guilty ones?”

“As sure as I can be of anything.”

“I am very sorry it has happened,” Bingo declared. “I think I’ll know the facts soon; then the line of action can be decided upon.”

“I thought you would want to know about it all, Colonel. I don’t care so much for the money loss; but it isn’t nice to see young boys doing things like that. I’m a father myself.”

“I understand.”

Colonel Crawford escorted the man back to the taxi.

Alone once more the Commanding Officer of Chatham thought hard at his desk. The wind of last night’s tempest had blown itself out. The time was at hand to deliver justice for the infractions of discipline at the dance. Bingo had been smiling to himself all the morning as he speculated upon what would have happened last night if some of those pillows instead of landing against a few cadets and upon the Armory floor had struck the shiny bald pate of T. J., for example, or had hit his own eagle-like head-mastery nose. Bingo was by no means so hard-boiled as he seemed.

But now with this lead-slug story just unfolded by the visitor, the C. O. smiled no more; for sorrow entered his heart. At first, he thought of consulting his intimate friend and colleague, the Commandant; then changed his mind; and walked alone with head bent over his tall form first to little Hiller's alcove, afterward into an alcove in Dormitory H.

It simply couldn't be so: the truth couldn't be as he had had it explained to him, no matter what he himself just had seen; he knew the boy too well, had known him for too many years.

Colonel Crawford would not act hastily. Therefore when the Sunday afternoon inspection was over, he bent himself to his work with respect to the infraction of rules on the night before. He called up boy after boy to his office.

"Cadet So and So, did you have anything to do with last night's infractions of the rules?"

"No, sir."

"Know anything about it?"

"No, sir."

Bingo knew most of the answers before he asked for them. But just as the cadets had to answer the questions, Bingo felt he had to ask them.

So he went over the roll patiently and devotedly: Cadets Atkins J, Atkins W, Blake, Bancroft, Case, Claymore, and so on and so on, alphabetically until he had called up every name save one.

George Case, caught in the net, had lied outright. Fred Barclay, Tibbotts, Richards A, and Fatty Williams acted according to one of the traditions for the circumstances: they managed by adroit maneuvering to dodge the C. O's call. Bingo recognized their absence and the probable cause of it; and decided to await developments: for he held always as a last resort a dire punishment, which however he had no wish to inflict if he could avoid it.

Then Bingo sent for the one man whose name he purposely had omitted. He was reluctant to call him, but it must be done.

"Did you have anything to do with last night's infraction of the rules, Angus?"

"I can't answer, sir."

"What's that?"

"No, sir. You are going through the entire battalion roll, sir."

"We always do; do we not, Angus?"

"I understand, sir."

"You mean you decline to answer: yes or no?"

"In the circumstances, sir, I'm afraid I do, sir."

The familiar slight smile flicked across the C. O.'s thin lips. This exact situation had arisen in Bingo's long experience about once every five years. Generally though when it had arisen, every cadet in school had taken such a course as Myron Angus now was alone in pursuing.

"I'm surprised that you are the only man who answers in this manner!" commented Bingo.

"Yes, sir," replied Angus non-committally.

"The boys could not have been thoroughly aroused until too late then."

"I don't know, sir," responded Myron much as a wooden image might speak if a wooden image could use words.

"Well, Angus," concluded Bingo, "for good or ill you've answered no doubt according to the code. I'll not quarrel with you for that."

Myron stood stiffly at attention in front of Bingo's desk while the tall, slender school President sat opposite him in the depths of a leather-covered chair. "In fact I don't mind your answer at all," continued Bingo as he straightened

his body after a moment's pause. "For I want to have quite a talk with you on possibly a more important matter."

"Yes, sir."

"I don't understand you," went on Bingo. "You've been here a number of years. You are intensely ambitious. You go out for everything. Apparently you want to represent the school in as many events as is possible in the Single Combats with St. James; and apparently, too, you'd like to be chosen as next year's Senior Captain."

"Only if I'm worthy of it, sir," broke in Myron.

"Precisely, Angus. And at about the time when you make me conclude that you are worthy of such an honor as the Senior Captaincy you do something which throws me into doubt about you."

"I don't understand, sir, please," said Myron.

"Let me summarize," answered the C. O. quickly. "Perhaps then we can understand each other better. You may even answer me so that I'll know myself mistaken."

Myron Angus never moved a muscle as Bingo paused and then went on:

"Angus, you stood by that new boy Hiller for example against a pretty bad bullying; yet you,

with Barclay, broke every rule when you two fought that day last fall. I intended to discipline you both; but didn't because of what followed almost at once. I mean at the power-house. That was as brave an act as ever has been performed by any boy in this school. Then you opposed the Faculty openly and bitterly with regard to the abolition of football; yet you accepted with good grace the Faculty's decision as soon as it was made. I am not sure that a man can be a good officer, to say nothing of whether he can be a Senior Captain, who does continually so many diametrically opposed things. What do you think?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Have you nothing to say?"

"Just, sir, that I am sorry for what I have done only if these things are wrong. I can do no more than that."

"In other words, Angus, you wish to stand on your record without defense."

"Yes, sir; I guess that's it, sir."

"Hum," grunted Bingo with his slight smile. Here Bingo's gaze went off toward the window. "I find that only yesterday," he continued, "you very quietly volunteered to risk your life again."

I refer to your offer to go out on that line at the Falls."

"Who—who—sir, told you that, please?"

"I've no objections to answering," said Bingo.
"Taylor W told me."

Myron made no comment.

"Well," declared the C. O. after a moment and turned his head back to the Cadet Sergeant, "I don't understand you, Angus." And then with a tragic expression on his face added, "A Falls druggist has just been in with a serious charge against Hiller and you."

Bingo paused and waited. Myron stood silent as though stunned.

"Did you hear me, Angus?"

"Yes, sir. Yes, sir!" Myron's words were hardly audible.

"Angus, have you nothing you can say?"

"Wh-what is the charge against me, sir, if I may ask?"

"He says that Hiller and a large boy whom he identified yesterday as you have been in his store a great deal and taken out chocolates and gum from his slot-machines by inserting lead slugs instead of regular coins. That, Angus, is counter ——"

“He said that about me, sir?” burst out Myron suddenly. “Why—why—I ——”

“Yes, Angus; and he’s found dozens of slugs in his machine.”

“I swear to you, sir, I ——”

“Don’t swear yet, my boy,” interrupted Bingo. “Please, please!—For look here!”

The President delved into his own right trousers pocket and brought forth in his hand to Myron’s view ten or twelve lead slugs the size of one-cent pieces.

“Ever see these before, Angus?”

“No, sir.”

“Do you know who made them?”

“No, sir.”

“Can you suspect who made them?”

“I can’t answer that, sir.”

“Why not?”

“I can’t answer that question, either, sir.”

“You never saw them before?”

“No, sir.”

“Why, Angus,” replied the C. O., “I found them in your alcove just now.”

CHAPTER XVI

MYRON CONDEMNED

"I CAN'T help that, sir, please," came back Myron Angus with indignation as a flush in his cheeks deepened to a dark crimson.

"Do you think that somebody must have put them there then?" returned Colonel Crawford.

"Somebody must have, sir."

"But you were in the drug store with Hiller yesterday; weren't you?"

"Yes, sir. And that man, sir, didn't find any slugs, either. Please, I have not done any such thing as this, sir."

"You must let me continue to question you," replied the C. O. in a not unkindly tone. "Doubtless it may all come out right for you; but here are these telltale slugs which I found on a shelf of the cupboard in your alcove." Bingo dropped the slugs back into his right trousers pocket. "If they are not yours, Angus, do you know who put them there?"

"I do not, sir," replied Myron with head high.

"I can understand your temptation to speak evasively, or even untruthfully," continued Bingo. "But I advise you not to do so."

"Very well, sir."

"Do you tell me straight then, Angus, that you know nothing about these slugs?"

"I know nothing, sir," answered Myron.

"Nothing about Hiller's connection with them either?"

"That, I must repeat, sir, I can't answer, sir."

"If you know nothing, you can answer, Angus; and if you know something, you've lied just now. You can see that, of course."

"Yes, sir."

Bingo arose; he was a trifle out of patience. "I've done all I can for you," he said, his voice dull and even. "Go to your quarters and remain there until you hear from me."

Myron saluted; about-faced; and started for his alcove. As he entered Dormitory H little Hiller came out from an alcove opposite: cowering, sniffing, his near-sighted eyes showing red through his thick spectacles.

"The drug-store man was h-here, Myron, h-here," he whimpered. "He's been in with

Bingo. Oh, don't peach on me; don't peach on me, please!"

Myron looked down upon Hiller a moment without speaking; Hiller was a piteous, small creature indeed: black hair parted crookedly on the side of his head, sallow face, thin little wrists, transparent, scrawny hands, dark eyes with their inflamed lids behind the glasses.

"What have you done, anyway, for me to peach about?" Myron finally asked. "You've told me always that you have not used lead slugs."

"Y-yes, sir, Angus. But don't—don't tell about yesterday, sir! Please! Please!"

"Peaching isn't done in this school, Hiller," Myron answered at length, his tone cold.

"Th-thanks, th-thanks, sir."

"You're welcome," responded Myron; then for a moment self-restraint left him. "Get out of my sight," he whipped out. "Get out; and be quick, I tell you: quick!"

"Hiller! Oh, Hiller!" The cry rang throughout the dormitory.

"Here! Here!"

"Bingo wants you right away," yelled Jim Tibbotts. "I been chasing you all over the place."

Meantime Schoharie the Silent, Porky Taylor, Fatty Williams, and Johnny, innocent of their chum's plight, sat on a bench at the side of the Gym near the tennis courts; basked in the May afternoon sun; and "gabbed."

"I'll bet old Bingo knows all about last night and who did it," chuckled Porky. "Fat, your name is Dennis! Wait till Bingo gets you!"

"He isn't going to get me," grinned Fat.

"Oh, I see," commented Porky wickedly. "What you going to do? Jump over the Falls or something?"

At Porky's last words, Schoharie the Silent permitted a small smile to make a momentary appearance at his thin lips; Johnny grunted; and Fat's expression changed instantly to one of grave concern.

"If you guys," replied Fat, "had only just refused to answer Bingo and ——"

"And all been put on bounds?" interrupted Porky with jeering merriment. "Ho! Ho!"

"Wonder where Myron is?" muttered Fatty.

"Say, I just been thinking," spoke up Schoharie irrevelantly, "about what happened between Myron and Fred before 'taps' last night."

"Me, too," put in Porky. "Been thinking

about it all day. Myron wouldn't say a word; asked him about it right after Chapel. Fred had told me all about it, though. Fred's just the way he used to be. I think it's fine."

John Hayes, with his chin in his hands, his elbows on his knees and still very much of a blighted being, gave Porky a withering glance and again grunted. Fatty was too absorbed in his own troubles even to take in what had been said.

"That's what I thought at first, Porky," continued the Silent Man. "Fred's impulsive; and he's an easy mark for a fellow like Case."

"I guess that's right," agreed Porky. "And what's worse, Fred's a fighting man."

"You'll think he is," smiled the Silent One, "after you get into that Top-Men Contest against him day after to-morrow."

"That'll be all right," vouchsafed Porky.

"But I'm afraid," added Schoharie. "Fred never liked anybody who opposed him, and is never going to."

"Why then did he talk to Myron that way last night?" Johnny Hayes snapped out in deepest sarcasm, without a turn of his head.

"Probably just happened to feel that way,"

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put in Porky. "Or of course he might have had some scheme; but I don't really believe he had."

"Pooh!" responded Johnny.

"I think Fred was more than square in that Graylock game," continued Schoharie the Silent.

"Maybe; but he's too susceptible to flattery, all right," declared Johnny from the depths of his collar. "We've always known that. I'll admit he's a fighter. I was just thinking that maybe he meant what he said last night, but he might not mean the same thing to-day or to-morrow or any time between now and the St. James Tournament or the giving out of the Senior Captaincy."

Then suddenly Johnny began to chuckle and kept on until he shook all over.

"What's the matter with you?" demanded the others.

"Look!" laughed Johnny. "Look at Varick W!"

There across the tennis court stood the Junior Captain hatless in the sun, his back toward the boys. And all beheld that he had plucked out enough hair from the crown of his red head so that a round perfectly bald spot about two inches in diameter had been created thereon.

“By Jinks!” quoth Johnny in admiration.
“Isn’t that a peach! Looks like a monk!”

Into Johnny’s soul had come prompt forgetfulness of woes; and an ambition to go at once and imitate on his own pate what the Junior Captain had done. But as it was nearly time to go into school and get ready for supper Johnny’s design for the time was thwarted.

A shock hit the battalion at that Sunday night supper formation.

Colonel Crawford had returned perforce to a further consideration of the infraction against discipline at the dance. He once again had sent out messengers to corral certain cadets; and once again the effort had proved fruitless. At this the C. O. had smiled to himself somewhat wistfully: for his duty now was plain. Hence as the battalion was about to march into Mess Hall that evening, the following order was read:

“For disorderly conduct the cadets named below will be on bounds for one week and will remain on bounds indefinitely thereafter, or until they have memorized and have recited perfectly to Mr. Bell the first two hundred and fifty lines of Longfellow’s ‘Hiawatha’:

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CADET SECOND LIEUTENANT BARCLAY
CADET CORPORAL TIBBOTTS
CADET CORPORAL RICHARDS A
CADET PRIVATE WILLIAMS

By Order of the President.
MARK LIVINGSTON, ADJUTANT."

It was now up to the cadets mentioned to prove their innocence. This was the dire punishment Bingo always had up his sleeve.

"Oooh!" groaned Fatty Williams to himself as he stood rigid in his inconspicuous place in the battalion line. "Two hundred and fifty lines! And that blinking Case gets out of everything!"

Fred Barclay, Tibbotts, and Richards A were equally mournful, though none felt Fatty's precise resentment against Case.

"George is lucky. Wish I'd lied out of it," muttered Richards A under his breath.

And possibly—though it is not known surely—Fred and Tibbotts had thoughts not so very different from those of Richards A. For two hundred and fifty lines are two hundred and fifty lines; and great always has been the travail of mind amongst Chatham cadets in the memorizing thereof.

At any rate, no further chances were taken with Bingo. No attempt was made by any of the culprits to prove his innocence; they simply swallowed their punishment like men.

That evening after Mess, however, the tribulations of the Dance Smashers were lost by the cadet corps in the almost unbelievable rumor which swept over the school: Myron Angus caught sticking slugs in a slot-machine with Hiller; and slugs found in Myron's alcove! It was scarcely credible. Yet the downcast faces and absolute silence of Angus's chums practically confirmed the worst. Also, it was obvious that Myron virtually was a prisoner in his alcove. He would see only those closest to him. Therefore the rumor seemed to be true.

Immediately after study-hour, Porky stopped Schoharie outside the School Room. "How do you suppose it got out, Silent?" asked Porky, his voice shaking.

"Easy," replied the Silent Man. "Tibbotts or Case got hold of young Hiller and bullied it out of him."

"Isn't there anything we can do?"

"Don't know. All Myron tells me is that he'll stick it out, whatever that means."

Twenty minutes were left before "tattoo" would sound; "taps" would follow ten minutes later. John Hayes and Fatty Williams now came up. Porky was thinking. For a moment no one spoke.

"Come on, let's all go and see Myron," declared the Porcupine at length. "I got an idea."

The four hurried instantly to Dormitory H.

"Man," began Porky as the four friends crowded in front of the iron cot upon the edge of which sat the Cadet First Sergeant of Company A. "Man, do you realize that unless you prove yourself innocent you'll not only never get the Senior Captaincy, but you ——"

"I understand that, Porky," interrupted Myron earnestly. "But I never did what Bingo says I did. It's up to Bingo to prove I did it. That's common law. A fellow doesn't have to prove first that he's innocent of a crime; the law has to prove first that he's guilty of it."

Porky blinked: "Where'd you get that?"

"Everybody knows that," returned Myron. "Ask T. J. if it isn't so; or old Hank, or 'Church' Bell."

"That's all right," broke in Johnny. "But, Myron, this is no court. And if you don't care

for the Senior Captaincy, maybe you care for us or the school; you say you're going to stick it out. What do you mean by that?"

"That I'm going to keep on plugging and attending to my business, Johnny. Bingo condemned me; it's up to Bingo!"

"Do you think that's fair, Myron?" demanded Porky. "Why, man, man, if Bingo thinks you're guilty of this—this awful crime, do you believe he'll let you represent this school against St. James in the Single Combats?"

"Of course he won't, Myron," interrupted Schoharie the Silent, "with such a stig—er—stigma on you. Suppose you were kicked out of the Top-Men Contest and the school lost!"

"Yes, suppose that!" chimed in Fatty who now spoke for the first time.

At this, Johnny H. Hayes jumped up in the air and landed on the cot, his knees under him, the top of his head in the pillow. "You big cuckoo-eyed goat!" he bellowed as he slammed impotently into the pillow with his fists. "Do something—before I commit murder!"

"There's nothing I can do, Johnny," replied Myron, a tinge of sorrow in his tones. "I'm going to stand by the school, of course. But

Bingo has accused me of something; I've denied it; he's placed me practically under arrest until I hear from him. What can I do?"

Johnny leaped to his feet again and faced his chum. "You can't do anything!" he snorted. "You're too blinking honorable or something. None of you guys ever can do anything. Take the bones out of your ears, all of you, and let the fish swim out!" Johnny turned and stalked from the alcove and dormitory.

"I'm going to see what that lad does," grinned Porky and followed Johnny.

In the hallway of the floor below Porky came upon Johnny in sputtering conversation with Senior Captain Atkins W and Junior Captain Varick.

"It does look black for the school, Hayes," the Senior Captain was saying. "I'll admit that. Varick and I were just talking about it. The school needs both Barclay and Angus. And now if Angus is out —— And the worst of it is that even if Angus can prove his innocence, a lot of the school might not believe him. The time is so short. A lot of 'em might not even want him to represent us against St. James. The majority might not."

“That’s just it,” agreed Cadet Captain Varick; and began to pull out more hairs around the bald spot on his red crown. “Clubs or no clubs, the school is what counts. Case and Fred Barclay are laughing their heads off right this minute.”

“Is Fred laughing, too?” demanded Porky.

“Well, Tibbotts and Richards and Case are.”

“Aw, what of that!” exploded Johnny as though his auditors had not been officers in the cadet battalion, but lowly privates such as was Johnny himself.

Then “tattoo” sounded and Johnny was compelled to take instant departure for his alcove to make ready for bed; which for Johnny was likely enough just as well.

Porky moved slowly after Johnny. “Black” was the right word, he concluded after much meditation. Black for the school, all right, maybe, but dead sure for Myron unless something could be done mighty quickly to help. Atkins W was a good-enough Old House man and Varick a good Lovering Hall guy. But they were both unconscious from the neck up. There was no time to lose. Why, the Top-Men Contest would be day after to-morrow!

CHAPTER XVII

A BOY DISAPPEARS

“SURE he’s guilty, fellows: everybody knows that!”

“Knows what?” exploded Porky.

“Knows he’s guilty,” repeated George Case somewhat nervously, but still without backing away.

It was noon next day on the sidewalk in front of the Armory. Mess call had not sounded as yet. A dozen and more boys who had been listening now stepped closer and surrounded George and Porky, with eyes intent and ears alert. There were Fred Barclay, Atkins W, Old Clay, Richards A, Tibbotts, and a host of lesser lights from Lovering Hall, Old House and the neutral body.

“How does everybody know he’s guilty?” smashed on Porky, with war in his little blue eyes. “Has Bingo said he’s guilty? Has Angus admitted it?”

“Of course not,” returned George Case as his blond head went back in a forced laugh which let

the sun mark sharply the red pimples in his face.

"But everybody knows it!"

"They do, eh? Well, they don't! And if you say they do you're a liar!" Porky stuck out his big chest and jerked his head sideways with belligerence.

"No man can call me that and get away with it!" came back George without much enthusiasm.

Porky grinned at this. "Huh!" he grunted. "Take a swat then; and give me the excuse to knock you into so many pieces your mother'll think you're something the neighbors left in her back yard!"

"Just the same," returned George with face now flushed, "if he is guilty he ought to be—to be fired—or something."

"That's different," said Porky.

"First call" for dinner now was sounded by the bugler. The boys started into the Armory, nearly all with solemn countenances, for there existed in most a desire to see fair play for Myron; besides there was great concern as to what would happen in the Single Combats of the St. James Tournament should Angus be excluded from competition. Could Fred possibly carry off honors in all three events? Were Porky

and Richards A good enough to beat the St. James men? Porky and Richards themselves knew they were not good enough. And in all human probability it would be necessary to capture at least some of the Single Combats if victory in the tournament were to be had.

"What do you think about it all, Fred?" asked Porky as they passed into the building.

"I don't know," answered Fred non-committally.

"What do you think, Clay?" the Porcupine turned to Old Claymore.

"If Angus is guilty, he ought to be fired," answered the old boy, "not only out of the school but out of Old House, too!"

"Rats!" returned Porky; and then suddenly: "Oh! Look at Johnny! He's gone and done to his head just what Varick W did! Say, Jawn," he grinned as he leaped after his friend, "when'd you do that?"

"Started it last night," smiled Johnny guiltily. "Just finished it now. How do you like it? Pretty fair? What?"

Porky scrutinized critically the crown of John H. Hayes' head: it was a bald spot all right, round as a fifty-cent piece and of about the same

size; and it surely did look sore. "Great!" he commented at last, his eyes dancing. "Could you do it to me right after dinner?"

"Sure I could," returned Johnny. "The quickest way to get it done is have somebody else do it."

"Oooh! Ouch!" bawled Porky within ten minutes after dinner was finished. "Have a heart, Johnny!"

"Hold still," commanded Johnny, his eyes sparkling while he gripped Porky's bristling tow hair with one hand and with the other plucked out hairs from the crown of Porky's head. "I got to yank 'em; haven't I?"

Porky was seated on a bench on the stone veranda of the Armory. "Sure you got to yank 'em; but don't pull 'em all out at once! Oooh! Ouch!"

"Shut up!" And Johnny brought forth about fifty hairs with one pull.

"Ooh!" yelled Porky. "Is it bleeding?"

"No!"

"Bleeding is dangerous," pleaded Porky. "Aren't you nearly through?"

"Pretty near. Hold still now, you old Porcupine!"

"Porky," corrected the victim.

"Porky your eye this time!" returned Johnny. "It's Porcupine!" And Johnny yanked forth another batch of hair. "There!" he declared and surveyed his work proudly. "Doggone if you aren't going to have a better place than mine!"

Porky felt of the bald spot gingerly. It was moist. He drew back his finger-tips on the instant and examined them. "I thought sure this time it was bleeding!"

"Bleeding nothing; that's sweat. I had it!"

So pretty soon the Porcupine bounded to his feet triumphant; and he and Johnny paraded down the walk in front of the main building, hatless and to the jeers, admiration, and envy of a following multitude.

At the end of the building nearest the campus they encountered Schoharie the Silent. "Flat heads!" said that gentleman scornfully, as his enigmatical smile flitted across his pale cheeks.

"What's the matter with us?" grinned Porky and butted Schoharie with his chest.

"Didn't I see you being barbecued by this shrimp?" returned the Silent Man as he backed

away and jerked his thumb toward Johnny.

"This guy, Hayes, has gone cuckoo!"

"We're monks," pronounced Johnny solemnly.

Just then Colonel Meadows appeared at the west end of the walk.

"Sco, let's the three of us ask T. J. if he won't go to Bingo for Myron," whispered Porky.

"Things are bad."

"All right," agreed Schoharie. "I heard about your row with Case. Myron still is up in his alcove."

"I know," acknowledged the Porcupine.

"If he's guilty, men," explained the Commandant with sadness in his voice, "of course he'll not be allowed in the Tournament. That goes without saying."

"But he's not guilty, sir," spoke up Johnny.

"I can't believe that he is either, men," answered T. J.

"Then, sir," put in Porky, his ruddy face smiling, "could—could you—sir, go to Bingo—I mean the C. O.—Colonel Crawford, please, sir, for him?"

"Perhaps the Colonel will send for me," responded Colonel Meadows.

"But if he doesn't send for you, sir, and things

go pretty bad for Myron, could you see him for Myron, anyway, sir? ”

T. J. rubbed his chin thoughtfully. “ Yes,” he answered after a minute. “ I’ll do that, men.”

The three boys thanked the master with all their hearts.

“ I have an idea that Angus is in with the President now,” ended the Commandant.

T. J. was right. At that very moment Myron stood before the C. O. in the presidential office.

“ Sergeant Angus, I have talked with Hiller as doubtless you are aware,” said Bingo. “ Hiller has denied everything in connection with the lead-slug business.”

“ Yes, sir.”

“ Have you anything to tell me more than you had yesterday? ”

“ No, sir.”

“ You may go about your duties, then, Sergeant. You need not be confined to your quarters any longer.”

“ Yes, sir.” Myron felt that he now was supposed to leave. He placed one foot behind the other in the first movement of “ about face ” ; but brought back the foot immediately to its former position ; came again to attention. “ Sir,”

he said, "am I to understand, please, that I am cleared of anything to do with this—this awful matter?"

Bingo shook his head. "I wish I could say that you are, Angus. I have sent for Hiller's father. After I have seen him I shall talk with you again."

"Does—does that mean, sir, you think that Hiller is guilty and you probably still feel, sir, that I am, too?"

"Naturally I have heard the stories about Hiller," replied Colonel Crawford. "But I gave them little attention hitherto. About you, my boy, my mind is open. My hope lies where my instinct is. But I must run this matter to the ground. I cannot and do not yet believe you guilty."

"Thank you, sir," replied Angus with all the earnestness he possessed.

"Go about your business then, Angus, and think of nothing else for the time," continued Bingo. "That's the best thing you can do."

"I will, sir," responded Myron fervently.

Myron about-faced; saluted, and retired from the room. As he walked slowly down the hall his thoughts for an instant turned bitter. "I'd

like to get that kid and wring his neck!" he murmured inaudibly. "I'd make him own up to everything. But no man can do that. That's bullying, I suppose." Myron went into the library; he was all alone. Suddenly his hands went up over his head. "Oh, it isn't fair!" he exclaimed under his breath. "To be—to be called—a counterfeiter!"

Drill formation was at hand. Myron hastened at once to the rifle-racks in the Armory; took out his white cotton gloves; buckled on his white belt with its shining brass buckle; slipped into his gloves; took down his "piece"; examined the "sight"; ran his eye along the shimmering "barrel"; seized the gun in his right hand; and, as "assembly" sounded, carried the weapon at "trail" and hopped into his place six paces in front of the center of Company A.

"Company A!—Attention!" he sang out as he brought his rifle to "order arms." Then he called the roll from memory alphabetically: "Aldrich, Atkins J, Bettelman, Beatty A, Beatty W, Craddock, etc., etc., until he had reached the end. Whereupon he about-faced and saluted his captain. "Sir," he reported in a strong tone, "two men absent, Cadets Loring and Hertzog."

Next to Company A on the left of the battalion line stood Company B. Cadet First Sergeant Sands, a slower-speaking lad than Myron, finished the calling of the roll of Company B just as Myron ended the report to Captain Atkins. Company A out of courtesy remained motionless and silent while Cadet First Sergeant Sands reported to the Junior Captain, Varick W, as regulations demanded.

“Sir,” sang out Sergeant Sands, “all present and accounted for—excuse me, sir, I mean one man absent—Cadet Hiller!”

“Inspection!—Arms!” instantly cried out Sergeant Angus.

“Order!—Arms!” he next commanded.

And Sergeant Angus took his post behind the rear rank at the right of the line of Company A.

“Inspection!—Arms!” repeated Sergeant Sands for Company B. “Order!—Arms!”

And Sergeant Sands likewise took his post at the right of his Company.

The band also now was at Attention.

“Men,” spoke a vibrant voice, and every eye but not a head in the cadet battalion moved for an instant toward the kindly-faced officer who now stood before the center of the line, capped,

gloved, sabered, and in the khaki uniform of a United States Infantry Colonel.

“Men, next Saturday we meet St. James Durham in the Military Tournament. We’re in good shape for the encounter.” Colonel Meadows gazed up and down the line and smiled. “Very good shape. To-day is Monday. To-morrow we hold the Top-Men Contest, so little time can be had to-morrow for drill. We must put in, however, all the licks we can between now and Saturday. General King, who commands the Post at Fort Niagara, is to judge the military end of the Tournament.

“As you all know, there will be a Guard Mount, a Review by General King, a Platoon Drill; and a drill in the Manual of Arms by the picked Star Squad. Each event, as you know, will count one. Number two platoon of Company A will carry the school honors in the Platoon Drill and will be under the command of Lieutenant Barclay. The Star Squad for the Manual of Arms competition will consist of Corporal Schoharie, Privates Hayes, Williams, Hertzog, Dickson, Bettelman, Beatty A, Beatty W, and will be under the command of Sergeant Angus!” T. J. paused; then his voice rang out:

“Right shoulder!—Arms! Right by Squads!—March!”

With an instant shuffling of one hundred and twenty-odd pairs of feet upon the hard-wood floor of the Armory, the Chatham Battalion began its march to the campus for a couple of hours of stiff drill.

“I tell you what let’s do,” whispered Johnny Hayes to Schoharie the Silent, who, as corporal of Johnny’s squad, marched next to Johnny in line: “Let’s us, you and me, Sco, get hold of that young Hiller and make him cough up the whole story; or we’ll beat his head off.”

“Something like that should be done,” murmured Schoharie. “Myron can’t do much for himself, I guess.”

“That’s right,” added Johnny. “Let’s get him right after drill.”

Schoharie nodded agreement.

The battalion now had reached the campus. T. J. was far in the lead; Atkins W at the head of his Company; Varick at the head of B; Myron Angus was at the right of the first squad. The band was playing. The battalion was marching straight across the campus toward the Lewiston Road whereon ran the trolley-car from Lewiston

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Heights to Niagara Falls. Off to the right, the drive wound its way through pines from the school, edging the south end of the campus and thence to the road.

"Battalion!—Halt!" commanded T. J. as the cadets reached the center of the campus. Almost as though they were one man, the order was executed. And click! click! click! the rifles came from right shoulder to order arms.

Every man took a breath; waited alertly while his eyes roamed as much in all directions as was possible without a movement of head.

A trolley-car now approached from Lewiston and stopped at the gate in front of the drive.

"Look at that!" breathed Johnny suddenly.

"I see it!" muttered Schoharie. Myron Angus, from his post, was also observant.

A small boy in the cadet gray uniform of Chatham, with an old suit-case in one hand, had slunk out from the midst of pines; had dashed across the road; and had boarded the waiting street-car.

Suddenly T. J. ripped off gloves and whistled between his fingers; ran forward; cried out, "Stop that car!"

But all too late: Thomas Hiller had run away from school.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE TOP-MEN CONTEST

“THAT kid is gone for good; and his father never will come to see Bingo now,” flashed through Myron Angus’s mind as the street-car disappeared and T. J. dispatched an orderly to report Hiller’s exit to Old Hank, who was master of the day.

“That’s confession for you, all right!” ran through the heads of nearly every other cadet who saw Hiller go.

“I wonder what Angus’ll do,” chuckled Tibbotts when drill was over.

“Who cares?” laughed Case. “He’s in it up to his neck!”

“Do you suppose he’ll skip from school, too?”

“No,” scorned George. “He’ll try to bluff it out. But, say, maybe he isn’t guilty! I guess he is!”

Myron’s particular chums in Old House were terribly disconcerted: they ran up to T. J. the moment the battalion was dismissed.

"Yes," answered the Commandant: "I must see Colonel Crawford, anyway. That boy, Hiller, moved quickly; didn't he?"

Then he paused a moment as he unhooked his saber scabbard from his belt, and gazed at the anxious boys before him while a smile gradually spread over his countenance. Schoharie held a dour expression, as, hatted, he stood silent and stiff; Porky and Johnny took off their caps and mopped the perspiration from their heads; and Fatty Williams with a sudden foolish grin did likewise.

T. J. burst out laughing. "I heard about you fellows," he declared. "Turn around, you boys, and let me look at you!"

Yes: there now were three of them! And Fatty's bald spot was the sorest and worst-appearing of the lot.

"Man! Man! Williams, when and how did you ever do that?" exclaimed Colonel Meadows. "Let me look at it." T. J. barely touched with his fingers the crown of Fatty's head.

"Ouch!" exclaimed Fatty as his shoulders hunched up.

"When and how, Williams? Man! Man!"

"Just before drill, sir," replied Fatty sheep-

ishly as he and the others again faced the Commandant. "I had to use the points of some scissors, sir, in order to get all the hairs out on time."

"I thought you'd used a shovel," replied T. J.

Hence it was that at supper formation that night an oral order was given by Colonel Meadows himself, an order which caused many chuckles and guffaws, despite discipline, and which made T. J.'s blue eyes sparkle as he gave it.

"Gentlemen," said he with an attempt at great solemnity, "newly bald cadets hereafter will be punished by the memorizing of two hundred and fifty lines; and the same punishment will be handed out to the present crop of bald heads unless hair is permitted to grow again at once."

That settled it. There were no more bald heads at Chatham that year at least.

"Colonel Crawford is getting in touch with Hiller's father," explained T. J. to Schoharie, Johnny, Porky, and Fatty as soon as mess was over. "Meanwhile, Angus will have to wait."

"Something should be done now, though, fellows," declared Porky to his three chums a few minutes later.

"I know it," responded Johnny. "I'm for

beating up Case, now that Hiller is gone. Case is at the bottom of this, anyway, I'll bet."

But the three others shook their heads. "That's no good yet, John," declared the Silent Man. "Case would never confess for that."

But the thoughts of the school, even including these four, quickly turned that night from lead slugs and Myron's predicament, and fixed upon the Top-Men Contest which would be held the following day.

Porky and Richards A grinned at each other as they met in the doorway of the School Room on leaving study hour just before "tattoo."

"How you feeling, Pork?"

"Fine. How you, Dicky?"

"Bear-cat! Bear-cat, man!"

"Say, I guess we'll both need all we've got tomorrow, though," grinned Porky.

Richards A ran a hand over his sleek black hair. "You said something that time, Porky," he admitted.

Fred Barclay was walking slowly up-stairs to his room, the center of an admiring crowd.

"Go to sleep right off, Fred," admonished Old Clay. "You've got the thing won hands down if you keep your shirt on."

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"I'll do both, all right, Clay," replied Fred, his fine clear skin shining under the electric lights of the hall.

"Sure you will."

"Good luck, Freddy, old boy," offered George Case.

"Hand it to 'em to-morrow, Barclay," added Tibbotts. "We know Richards A has no chance."

"Thanks, fellows; I'll do my best." And Fred Barclay with a wave of his arm and a smile went into his room.

To Myron Angus, however, contemplation of the next day meant mostly a grim determination to fight on to the end regardless of everything; it was no fun to be considered a counterfeiter and—thief.

Between "tattoo" and "taps," Bingo came into Myron's alcove. "I'm sorry young Hiller got away," said he, "but keep up your nerve, my boy."

"I will, sir," responded Myron earnestly.

The C. O. looked squarely into the boy's face. "Good-night, Angus," he added with expressionless mien, and went on his way.

The Top-Men Contest took place in the gym-

nasium at three o'clock on Tuesday, May twenty-eighth. Cadets packed into the building and lined the walls. The wrestling-matches were first run off. Porky and Richards A began them; and a very good contest they both put up. Porky won. Yet, in truth, it cannot be said that either for a moment was classed with Myron or Fred.

Then Myron took on Porky and twice promptly threw him; Fred a few minutes later did the same to Richards A. Monty, the coach, and T. J. who were to decide the contests and choose the men for the Single Combats against St. James, smiled happily. It was marvelous, anyway, to have such good second-string men.

"Fine work, Taylor! Fine work, Richards!" both called out.

Then the wrestling-match between Myron and Fred was on. Agility, cleverness, and superb strength were shown by both boys. Two bouts of three minutes each were ordered. If no falls should take place, the best work would determine the man who would wrestle the St. James representative.

Legs, arms, and bodies flew around like lightning. It was beautiful wrestling. The ap-

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plause from all sides was continuous and deafening. No falls occurred. But when the allotted periods were over, no question existed as to which was the better man. T. J. put his hand on Fred's shoulder and cried:

"Barclay wins!"

"Yow! Wow!" yelled the school.

"Barclay! Barclay! Barclay!
Fred, old boy!"

Myron gripped Fred's hand as the two arose and faced each other in the center of the mat. "Congratulations, old fellow!" said Myron with a smile.

Gymnastics came next. Again Porky and Richards started matters. They did their best; and again a fine best it was. But once more every cadet who watched, knew them to be outclassed by the two who would follow. So when Monty and T. J. and the packed gymnasium gazed first upon the work of Myron and then upon that of Fred it was taken for granted that Porky and Richards A were eliminated. For seldom had been seen at Chatham such splendid work as Myron and Fred put up on the parallel bars. Such dips, both short-armed and long-

armed, few cadets ever had seen anywhere; and when Fred did his magnificent backward Giant's Swing on the horizontal bar, the applause was tumultuous.

"Both Barclay and Angus are pretty close, though, Colonel," declared the coach when all was over.

"Yes," agreed T. J. "If anything, Angus is better than Barclay on the parallels."

"I think he is, too," replied Monty. "But that backward Giant's of Barclay's! By George, sir, that has class."

"It has," declared Colonel Meadows with conviction. "It will just about do the trick to win the Gymnastics for us, too."

"I agree," chuckled Monty.

So amidst more shouts, T. J. again put his hand on Fred's shoulder and announced:

"Barclay's event!"

Myron once more gripped Fred's hand. "Congratulations!" he repeated sincerely.

Then followed boxing. T. J. decided on two one-minute rounds for each bout.

Barclay against Porky commenced things. Porky, laughing, jumped in with a rush, and slammed mighty fists rapidly, straight out in

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front of him. "It's my only chance, you old terrier!" he snorted gaily.

Bing! Bang! Barclay side-stepped easily; and the blows heard were his fists on Porky's cheek and nose. The round ended quickly and the second was like the first.

Well, that battle was easily determined. The crowd roared with laughter. As the scrap ended Porky grinned and stuck forth his hand, which Fred took instantly.

"Barclay wins!" cried T. J.

Then Fred took on Richards A. The result was the same. Obviously, Richards A was a cleverer boxer than Porky, but by no means so good a natural fighter.

Then Myron met Porky and that match was a glory of fistic convolutions.

Porky walked up to Myron at the sound of the bell; ducked as though a blow were coming straight toward his nose, though no blow from Myron was even started. Then Porky raised his head quickly and implanted a right uppercut on the tip of Myron's jaw.

Myron staggered for an instant.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" yelled the crowd. "Porky! Porky! Look at that Porcupine!"

It was a real question, though, who was the more surprised by that uppercut, Myron or the Porcupine. At any rate, Porky now stood off from Myron a moment; and his ruddy countenance burst into a big grin. Myron grinned also.

"Stay right there, you old Porcupine!" laughed Myron; then began to put the blows on Porky: not hard ones, just light showers of them on head, body, nose, and face; and Porky soon was quite helpless so far as parrying them was concerned. So the crowd had plenty of fun over that bout, too. And when it was over with Myron declared the winner, Porky announced in a roar, "Fellows, I'll admit this Angus a worthy opponent, yea even possibly a better man!"

Richards A followed. And Myron disposed of him quite as easily as Fred Barclay had done the job.

"I kind of wish Porky and Dicky hadn't both been eliminated, though," pronounced Johnny ruefully as Myron's victory over Richards A was called out. "Dicky never could whip that old Porcupine in forty thousand years, and it would have been a great scrap!"

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No one disagreed with Johnny; for it was readily manifest that Johnny was about right.

A ten-minutes' wait ensued; an almost breathless one for the crowd. Then Myron and Fred faced each other. Myron showed at once that he had no intention to be caught as he had been last fall. He was wariness personified; though he weaved in and out with courage and force. Fred was as alert as Myron. For a round and one-half no school ever saw better-matched men.

But now! What was this? Myron was suddenly like a tiger. The change came without warning. He lost none of his wariness, but with the speed and strength of the great jungle cat he was in on Fred and all over him. His powerful arms shot forth in streaking flashes. Fred was bewildered; he covered up and tried to clinch. But Myron forced him to stand off and shot blow after blow against body, head and jaws.

"Wow! Yow!"

The school yelled frantically.

"Myron! Myron! Myron!"

"Oh! Oh! Oh!"

And then the fight was over.

"Aaay! Yaay!"

Fellows danced and shouted; others were so

utterly surprised that they could only remain stock still.

Monty leaped at Myron and punched him in the ribs through sheer excitement, while T. J., holding Myron's right hand aloft, shouted:

"Angus wins!"

"Oh, by George!" Fatty danced and yelled.

"By Gum! By Gum!" thundered Porky, and seized Myron about the waist.

Johnny Hayes tried to stand on his head, elated beyond words.

Case and the Lovering Hall men and Old Clay were silent in their daze.

But Fred Barclay stuck forth his hand. "You certainly did give it to me, Myron!" he declared smilingly.

"Thanks, Fred," answered Myron modestly, as he returned Fred's grip.

"It was wonderful!" exclaimed Monty a few minutes later to a crowd which surrounded him. "For really a good big man should whip a good little man every time. Fred outweighs Myron ten pounds!"

"It should have been a draw then!" piped up Case.

"Sure it should!" echoed Tibbotts.

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"We're deciding on a team, boys; nothing else!" called out Monty.

"Yes," declared T. J. "Both men could not meet the Durham boxer. Angus won."

"Three cheers for Barclay and Angus!" a voice suddenly shouted. "Hip! Hip!" and the school responded:

"Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!
Barclay! Barclay! Barclay!
Angus! Angus! Angus!"

Then from Fred Barclay: "Three cheers for Myron, the best scrapper we've got!"

The cheers were given with a will.

As they ended, Myron called out:

"Three cheers for the man who represents us in two of the three Single Combats next Saturday: Fred Barclay! Hip! Hip!" and the crowd thundered:

"Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!
Barclay! Barclay! Barclay!"

"The best athlete in the school!" added George Case at the top of his voice.

"Hooray!" repeated the crowd.

"You bet!"

“ You bet he is! ”

“ Fred, old boy! ”

Myron picked up a bath-towel, mopped the perspiration from his forehead; ran the towel over his black hair; rubbed his chest with it.

Of a sudden Fred was surrounded by adulators and half pushed, half carried toward the Gym doorway, with a vast crowd following closely behind.

“ Where’s Myron? ”

“ Where is he? ” cried the voices of Porky and Johnny.

“ Right here,” answered Myron as he pulled on a sweater and ran to join the crowd which was carrying off Fred.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PORCUPINE

“WHAT do you think, Porky?” questioned John H. Hayes at six o’clock that night as he joined his chum on the west end of the drive in front of the Chapel. “I was just up in H; that fellow, Angus, is studying!”

“No!” Porky grinned.

“Surest thing there is! Say, a guy like Myron has a tough life.” Johnny doubled up his fists; stretched his long arms up over his head; brought them down slowly in a wide sweep over his shoulders as he opened his big mouth and yawned. “Well,” he concluded, “I suppose a school has to have studies and things like that or it couldn’t have scholars and things like us, Pork!”

Porky’s grin grew wider and took on a self-conscious aspect.

“Got a Piety test for Friday, John,” he confided. “Old Hank soaked me with it on the campus just now. Wonder what I’d better do about it?”

"Study for it," responded Johnny without mercy.

Johnny received a "sock" on the chest for this from the Porcupine's fist.

George Case now had recovered considerably from the fright he had received the day before from Porky Taylor; anyway, young Hiller had skipped from school; and despite Myron Angus's win in the boxing contest, George felt fairly content. George ambled down the walk at Fred Barclay's side.

"You'll be Senior Captain next year sure, Fred," he remarked.

"Don't talk foolish!" replied Fred as he saw Johnny and Porky approaching from the opposite direction. "Myron is in the running. Make no mistake about that."

"Piffle!" snorted George.

"Hello, Freddy!" greeted Porky. "All washed up for supper? You sure do pack a mighty wallop! Don't know about Myron; but, O boy, I can feel your hefty swats yet!"

"Didn't mean to hurt you, though, Pork," laughed Fred.

"Oh, you didn't really." Porky thereupon snapped the back of the fingers of his left hand

against Johnny's right shoulder. "They can say what they want, Jawn, we've got two classy athletes in this old shack! Durham's got nothing that can touch either Myron or Fred here, I'll bet! Don't you think so, too, Georgie?"

Case allowed that the Porcupine was more than right.

At this moment Old Clay came up, his putty face and black eyes looking sour indeed. Schoharie the Silent was with him.

"A lot of kicking is going on, fellows," Claymore began at once.

"What's the matter?" demanded Fred, fixing a steady eye on the grumbler.

"Just this," answered Claymore. "I'm an Old Houser and so are you. We all are right here except George. But being Old Housers should make no difference what we think about Angus. Lots of fellows, including me, can't see a man who's accused of what Angus is, representing Chatham in anything."

"Who's accused him?" asked Fred casually.

"Aw, Fred! Bunkerino!" scathed Old Clay as two yellow spots flashed into his black eyes. "Angus ought to prove himself innocent, or he shouldn't represent this school in anything!"

Why, he's even the Manual-of-Arms Squad leader!"

George Case smiled; turned; and walked away. Schoharie linked an arm under one of Porky's arms and one of Johnny's. "Excuse me, fellows," said he over his shoulder as he led his two chums off toward the Armory, in order to get a chance to speak freely.

"I don't know what's got into Clay and a lot in this school," began Schoharie very quietly as soon as Porky, Johnny, and he were free of Claymore and Fred. "But Myron's got to be cleared of this lead-slug business right now. Unless something's done, even Old House will turn against him."

"I think so, too!" snapped Johnny.

"No use getting mad," observed Schoharie.

"No, you chump!" echoed Porky.

"I'm very much afraid," continued Schoharie, "that Myron's win this afternoon has made matters worse for him: Case and Claymore and Tibbotts and that whole gang are rousing the school against him. See you later. I'm going to do some thinking."

Porky blinked as Schoharie left them. Porky had reached a definite conclusion himself; the

Top-Men Contest momentarily had put it from his mind.

“Let’s chase up Fat,” Johnny finally offered for want of better to say.

Instead, however, they headed straight for the corner alcove in Dormitory H. “We’ve just about time to see Myron before ‘first call’ for supper,” remarked Johnny.

Atkins W was with Myron as the two reached the alcove.

“Just been trying to tell Angus,” the Senior Captain explained, “that, while we all are his friends, he must clear himself right off or withdraw from the St. James Tournament.” Atkins W stood at the end of the alcove, his tall, slender back to the east window and gazed down at Myron who sat on the edge of the military iron cot and laced up a shoe. “Not that we believe you’re guilty, old man. You did a fine job to-day; but the school won’t stand for this other.”

“You mean you won’t, Atkins,” barked out Johnny suddenly.

“Well, yes,” admitted Atkins. “And why should I?”

“Then there’s going to be a fight!” put in Porky, his chin out.

Myron arose; slipped into his cadet blouse; buttoned it; hooked the tight cloth collar; never said a word.

"You mean a fight with you, Taylor?" asked the Senior Captain coolly.

"Hadn't thought of that," responded Porky. "I mean a fight ——" he hesitated;—Atkins W was a big figure in the life of the school—one of the biggest. Porky stumbled on, "I mean a fight in the whole school."

"There can't be one, Taylor. The school would suffer too much by a thing like that. No man would stand for it."

"But it's all right for Myron to get the worst of it, though!" interrupted Johnny.

"The school is not likely to want a man accused of what Myron is to be even a squad leader," replied the Senior Captain as he ignored Johnny's attack. "I've been trying to explain that, too!"

"You're a fine Old House man, you are, Atkins!" snorted Johnny forgetful of all respect due Atkins' high office. "What do you think Myron should do?"

"You've heard what Atkins believes, boys," broke in Myron, his tone quiet.

"But you're innocent, Myron!" blurted out Johnny.

"Sure you are!" added Porky with absolute conviction. "What you going to do?"

"Stick," answered Myron.

Mess call was blowing. The four hurried down-stairs immediately.

"You're going to get out of this if it's a possible thing," whispered Schoharie as he and Myron walked up toward the library near the President's study when the battalion had been dismissed after Mess was over. "You're not guilty. I wouldn't even insult you by asking you to say that you're not."

Myron turned a quick glance to the Silent Man. "Of course I'm going to get out of it if I can. I'm worried, though, about the school, Sco, and——" Myron hesitated; then added: "and about Old House. I want to do what's right."

"Fair enough!" muttered the Silent Man. "I'm going to——" Schoharie stopped in the middle of his sentence; for the attention of both was suddenly focused on a broad-shouldered, deep-chested cadet who now came out of the President's study, waved to them, grinned at

them and rushed down the "masters' stairs" which led to the walk in front of the main building.

"Now what do you suppose that Porcupine is up to?" muttered the Silent Man.

"Don't know," responded Myron with a laugh.

Nor did any one else know; for Porky without a word to a soul, had cooked up an excuse for Bingo and had obtained permission to go to Buffalo.

"Please, sir, Angus is the man who befriended your son when your son was first a new kid," spoke Porky calmly next morning to the father of Thomas Hiller.

"But do you realize, young man, that you are asking me to admit that my boy is a counterfeiter?"

The two sat opposite each other in the big living-room of Mr. Hiller's home.

"Yes, sir; I suppose I do," Porky replied. "But stories of lead slugs and your son, sir, have been going around from the day Thomas entered school, sir. Why, sir, he was terribly bullied on account of them. Angus stood up for him and stopped the bullying." Porky's body was held

stiffly in his chair, though bent forward at a small angle; his cheeks were flushed; his cadet cap was in his lap, clutched tightly at the shining leather visor by both of his hands.

“You mean,” questioned Mr. Hiller, “that the druggist identified Thomas and Angus as the boys who put slugs into his machine?”

“Yes, sir; but some mistake is there, dead sure.”

“And you say that lead slugs were found in Angus’s alcove, also?”

“Yes, sir; but I don’t believe they were his. Some one else put them there.”

“I see. But you believe my son is guilty.”

Porky’s flush deepened. “Well, sir—I—believe Angus is not guilty, sir.”

“Why?”

“Because—because, sir, I know him, sir.”

A laugh of irony escaped the father. “But my little boy is guilty. That’s it; isn’t it?”

“I didn’t say that, sir.”

“No?”

“No, sir: I only want to find out, sir, and save—save Angus.”

Mr. Hiller arose; Porky Taylor started to do likewise. “Keep your seat!” commanded the

older man and stood over him. "Now exactly what do you want me to do?"

"Find out, sir, please, if—if Thomas knows who put those slugs in Angus's room; and if he'll say that Angus never was with him when those—those slugs were used."

"By George, you're young indeed!" exclaimed the father. "Go back to your school and tell your President that if he has anything to say to me to say it direct and not through a boy!"

Porky was on his feet now with eyes unflinchingly upon the irate man in front of him. "He didn't know I was coming to you, sir. Bingo—Colonel Crawford—didn't—I made up an excuse to get permission to come to Buffalo. No one knew I was coming to you, sir."

Mr. Hiller's face suddenly relaxed. "You're trying to save a chum; aren't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"A chum who helped my boy once?"

"Yes, sir—Please!"

"No!" The father suddenly shook his head with definiteness. "Not convict my own flesh and blood; not for any one!" He turned his head suddenly away.

Then the door from the dining-room opened.

A whimpering little boy appeared. He cast a frightened glance at Porky; turned his eyes a moment piteously up to his father; darted across the room; and buried his head within his father's open arms.

"There, there, little boy; it's all right," soothed Mr. Hiller. "It's all right. Nothing, nothing's going to happen to you now." And he stroked the top of his son's head. "You didn't do anything; did you, my boy? Did you?"

A shriek, a wail rent the room, followed by a torrent of weeping. "No—n-no—n-no, Dad: I didn't; honest I didn't, Dad! Don't send me back, please. Don't! Don't!"

And the father answered gently: "Don't worry, little son, for I believe you."

CHAPTER XX

OLD HOUSE

“HE wouldn’t budge, Myron. He just wouldn’t pay any attention to anything I said to him,” Porky poured out the story of his visit to Mr. Hiller as soon as he returned to school that night.

“Oh, that’s all right, Pork,” responded Myron. “You did all any friend could do. I’m mighty grateful for that.”

They stood facing each other in Myron’s alcove.

Porky’s little blue eyes were alive with fight and his cheeks were very red. “What’s happened all day here?” he asked.

“Nothing,” replied Myron.

“Say! Where you been, Pork? Gee Whiz!!!” It was Johnny who with Fat and Schoharie at his heels bounded into the alcove. “You never let a fellow know!”

Whereupon Porky again unfolded all that had happened since the night before. “I’m going in to tell Bingo now,” he ended. “Things can’t be any worse than they are!”

“That’s a good idea, Porky,” approved Scho-

harie the Silent as the usual slight smile flitted across his thin lips. "But things can be worse."

"What do you mean?" demanded Porky.

"I've just been with Claymore and Atkins and George Case and Tibbotts. Those fellows now say that Myron here will either prove himself innocent or get out of school at once; or they'll know the reason why!"

"You fellows all are my best friends," Myron now broke in. "You know that I probably can't prove myself innocent of this terrible thing before the St. James Tournament, anyway. Why, this is Wednesday night and the Tournament is Saturday." Myron's black eyes were very earnest indeed as he looked into the faces of his four chums. "I don't want to hurt the school. But I've got to stick. I've done nothing. I just simply can't run."

At this Porky Taylor's coarse tow hair seemed suddenly to bristle even more than ever. He stuck out his chest and stepped close to Myron. "Of course you can't run!" he propounded. "Maybe I can't lick you alone, old timer, but Silent here and Fatty and Johnny and I can do it together. And, by Jinks, we will if you shoot off your face any more!"

All laughed; though Myron stood a bit bewildered.

"Say nothing," Porky continued, commandingly. "Wait till I've seen Bingo."

"But maybe the school won't wait, Porky." It was Schoharie again.

"They'll wait till morning, now," commented Johnny acidly and with an affected yawn. "There goes 'tattoo.'"

Next morning was Thursday: the school's weekly holiday. It was Memorial Day also. For some reason, for the first time in years the school would not parade at Niagara Falls, though large numbers of cadets undoubtedly would be downtown in the afternoon, watching the militia parade. But Porky had great fears for the morning. He was at his job early.

"Yes, Taylor: I think with you that beyond doubt young Hiller lied to me and that he is guilty," admitted the C. O. after Porky had repeated as well as he could remember every word of the interview with Mr. Hiller and had asked: "Don't you think, sir, that Hiller is guilty and that Angus is innocent?"

"Yes, probably you're entirely correct," continued Bingo. "But the difficulty is to prove it."

Still I'm glad you went to see Mr. Hiller, very glad, Taylor. Your visit may do a lot of good. I must somehow see Mr. Hiller myself at once."

"Fine, sir. That's fine, sir!" exclaimed Porky fervently. "If you could do it now, sir, now. The school is turning against Myron, sir; and the St. James Tournament is day after tomorrow."

The Chatham President arose from his desk and as his thin form towered over Porky, he said: "Don't worry about that. The boys will not get away from us." That was all and those last words were spoken unsmilingly and in a very low tone.

"Yes, sir," replied Porky. "Thank you, sir." Porky started to back from the room; stopped. "Just one thing more, sir, please. Did any one lately ever report, sir, that any money had been stolen in this school?"

"No, Taylor," answered Bingo.

"Case didn't then, sir?"

A slight smile appeared at the C. O.'s lips. "I said no one," responded Colonel Crawford. "Why do you ask?"

"Oh, nothing, sir. But I think I see a lot of things, sir," Porky chuckled. "By Jinks!" he

suddenly let forth. "Thank you, sir." He saluted; about-faced; left the room.

Fatty and Johnny were awaiting him in the hall outside the C. O.'s study.

"What happened?" demanded Johnny.

"What did Bingo say?" echoed Fatty.

"Bingo'll never let anybody get away with anything funny," confided Porky in a whisper. "That's all fixed, and I've got an idea myself."

"Maybe Bingo won't let anything funny happen," returned Johnny. "But something funny's already gone on." He jerked his head toward Claymore and Atkins W who were down by the *Carpe Diem* clock at the library entrance in earnest conversation. Schoharie was standing between Old Clay and the Senior Captain, listening. "Atkins W down there," Johnny continued, "has called a meeting of Old House in his room at eleven o'clock."

"What?" exploded Porky as he scratched the bald spot on his head as though it itched worse than a dozen mosquito bites. "What's that mean?"

"Trouble," replied Johnny laconically; "and it's spread all through the place."

"What's Sco think?"

"He's for the meeting," said Johnny in disgust.

"So am I then," declared Porky to the surprise of Fat and John. "I'd just like the opportunity to lick up somebody."

"Huh!" grunted Johnny. "There's somebody now for you, just coming up to our fine Senior Captain."

Signs of wicked glee spread over Porky's face. "Hey, you!" he called down the hall. "Come here a minute, please!" Porky took about seven paces forward while the cadet he had called approached.

"Say you," began Porky in a low but terrific voice the moment the two met. "You told me a while ago that a lot of swiping of money had been going on; didn't you?"

"Sure," replied George Case as a flush mounted in his cheeks. "That's right."

"Well, did you report it?"

"Sure I did," answered Case.

"You did, eh?"

"Sure," repeated Case; but now began to show real uneasiness.

"You told me, too, that you thought young Hiller was doing the swiping," went on the re-

lentless Porky. "Did you find out for certain that he was the guy?"

"Say, Taylor," returned Case with great effort as he moved back a step, "what business is all this of yours?"

"Oho!" snorted Porky as with chest expanded he moved close to Case again. "Well, I say you didn't report that any money had been swiped from you!"

"I'm a liar then, I suppose?" asked Case.

"Sure you are," grinned Porky; "and I think you're a counterfeiter, too!"

"What?"

"That's what!" Whereat Porky ran the edge of his mighty right hand down over George Case's nose and up again quickly.

"Haw! Haw!" roared Johnny. "That's worth the full price of admission!"

"Atta boy, Pork!" yelled Fatty.

Thereupon Porky in great satisfaction turned from George, and, between Johnny and Fatty, marched down the hall with an expression of duty well done upon his countenance.

"Now let's go and tell Myron what Bingo said," he declared, as they reached the floor below, "and tell him to keep his shirt on."

At eleven o'clock on that Thursday morning all thirty Old House men crowded into Atkins W's room. Those who had beat to walk had gotten excused temporarily.

At first, Myron thought he should not attend the meeting; but Schoharie convinced him that it was the thing to do.

"We'll fight this whole thing out now, Myron," the Silent Man had said. "I'm glad that Atkins W started it."

The Senior Captain presided over his club-mates. He was at a table near the end of his long narrow room. Behind him were half a dozen fellows crowded on the iron military cot which stood next the wall with its foot near the window. Around him and in front of him in chairs, on trunks, on the top of the bureau, with a few on the floor in all manner of more or less easy positions sprawled the balance of Old House.

Myron, Schoharie, Johnny, Porky, and Fatty were seated on two trunks which were against the wall at Atkins' left. Fred Barclay, Claymore, and Mark Livingston, the battalion Adjutant, were in chairs directly opposite.

"We have a very serious problem before us,

fellows," began Atkins W. "We all know what's up. One of our honored members has been accused of a—of a hi-eenus crime."

Somebody chuckled: "What kind of a crime?"

"A—a—hi-eenus crime," pronounced Atkins W solemnly. "Don't you know what that means, Blake?"

"Spell it; will you please, At?"

"Order!" thundered the Senior Captain; and batted his table with a big wooden gavel. "This is no time to get fresh. "H-e-i-n-u-s. That's the way to spell it, if you want to know."

"O baby!" burst out Johnny Hayes as Blake and he united in laughter.

"*Hanus*. That's the way to pronounce it," came back Blake.

Atkins W withered them each with a look. "We'll get down to business now," he announced with gravity. "No more childish interruptions, please." And as he ran his hand over his chin a wave of chuckles rippled over the room; for it was noticed that this movement by the Senior Captain was an attempt to hide the flush which was rising swiftly into his dark cheeks.

"Fellows, as I was saying, one of our honored members has been accused of a—of a"—Atkins

W swallowed hard—"of a crime. All of us in Old House, of course, want to stand by him; but many of us in Old House think that he also should stand by this club." Atkins W paused.

"Mr. President, what do you mean please by that last?" It was Schoharie, very quietly.

"I'll explain it, Silent: Sergeant Angus up to date has not proved his innocence. The school quite rightly thinks no man while he is under such a cloud should represent us in the St. James Tournament, because if he did the fair name of Chatham would be sullied."

"What's that, Mr. President?" broke in Johnny in deepest sarcasm. "The fair dame of Chatham would be sullied!"

"Fair name!" scathed Atkins W. "I said fair name, Hayes."

"Just as much sense in one as the other," persisted Johnny.

"Shut up!" Porky's elbow landed against Johnny's ribs. Johnny caved in with a growl; but obeyed.

"I've told Angus," continued Atkins, "that honor demands he should withdraw. He has refused. Therefore, by his refusal Old House, as I see it, is dragged into the dirt unless Old

House shows by actions its—its—re-repudiation of the stand Sergeant Angus has taken.”

A low murmur of approval of the Senior Captain’s words mixed by another one of disapproval swept over the room.

“Mr. President, what action do you think Old House should take?” Again it was Schoharie very quietly.

“Yes; what do you think we should take?” It was Fatty Williams this time.

“I’ll tell you fellows what action we should take.”

Every eye turned to a plump cadet with a first lieutenant’s insignia on his shoulders who now arose. “If Angus doesn’t withdraw like a man, Old House should disown him. Yes: throw him out if you like it better that way!” Claymore, his beady eyes burning, his putty cheeks with a touch of color rising in them, faced Angus across the room. “What do you want to bring a bad name to this school for, anyway, Angus?” he demanded fiercely. “I should think that would be the last thing you’d want to do.”

Myron’s black eyes were hard upon Claymore; not a muscle in his face or body moved. He made no immediate attempt to answer.

“Nothing to say? Is that it?” sneered Old Clay.

And then a man at Claymore’s side arose slowly to his feet. He had big shoulders and a very deep chest. Claymore sat down as though by instinct.

“Are we trying Myron Angus, Mr. President?” asked Fred Barclay easily. “Are we a court of inquiry or something? If we are trying him, by what authority are we doing it? Is Old House a court? That’s what I’d like to know. But if we are a court, Angus ought to be given a fair chance to defend himself, with fellows acting as lawyers for him, and things like that. It ought to be regular, I think.” And Fred Barclay sat down.

“This is no court, Fred. This is ——”

“Let me say something please, fellows,” interrupted a well-known voice.

Schoharie grabbed Myron by the skirt of his blouse. “Sit down!” he whispered.

“No, Sco.”

At this Johnny Hayes threw up his hands, crossed his knees and gazed at the floor in utter despair. But every other man turned eyes upon Myron Angus.

"I know the hole Old House is in because of me," Myron said slowly, "and I know the hole that I'm in. But, fellows, I can't withdraw from the St. James Tournament, either as a Squad leader or as a Single-Combat contestant; because that would be practically a confession that I'm guilty; and it isn't fair."

"No, it wouldn't be a confession!" broke out Claymore.

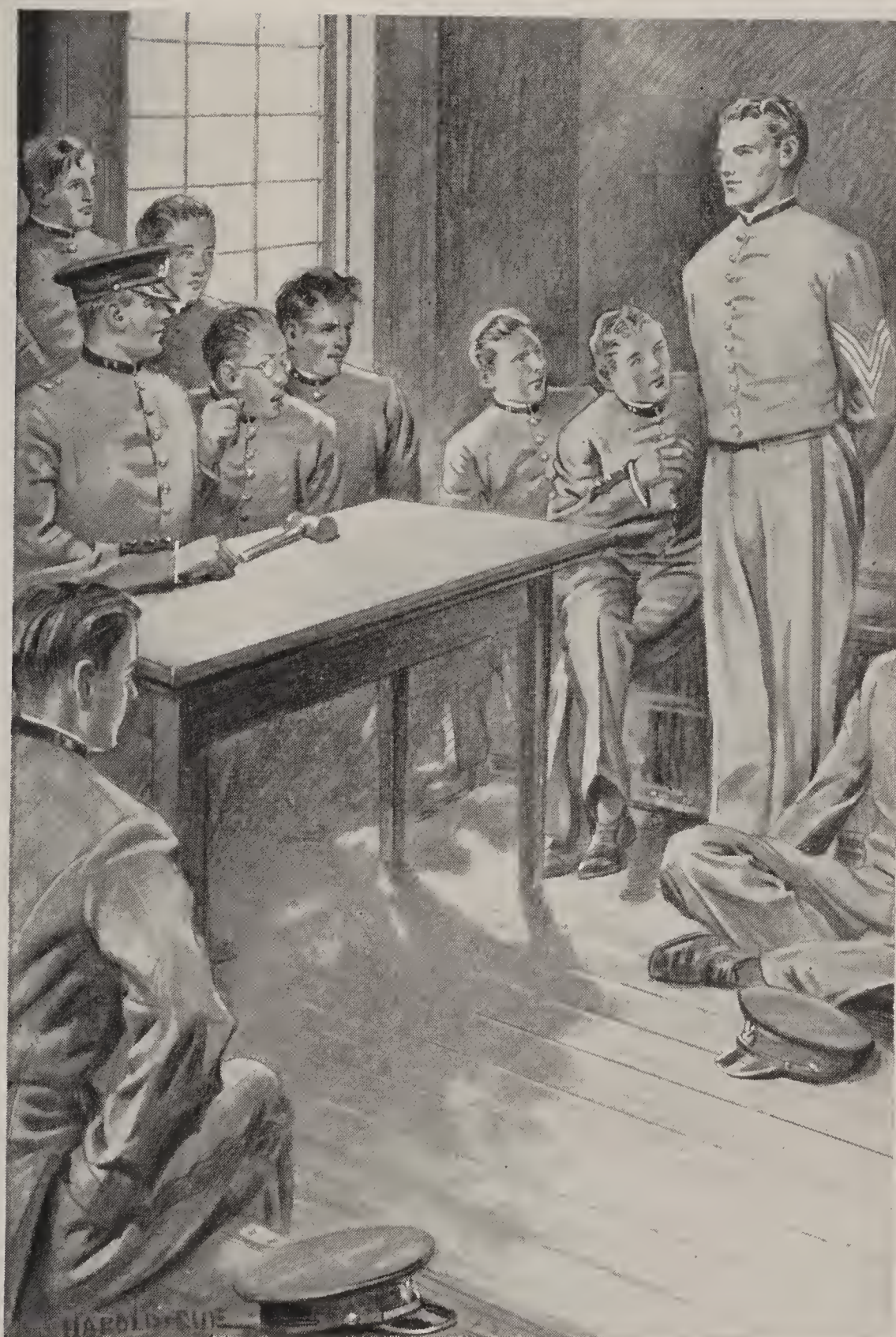
"Yes it would!" yelled Johnny.

Atkins W whacked his table with his gavel. "Order!" he again shouted.

"Withdraw for the honor of the school!" cried Old Clay, "at least until you're cleared of what you're charged with!"

But at this Porky Taylor leaped up. "If he does," he roared, "I'll lick him! Doggone me if I won't!"

That broke the strain. Every one laughed; even Myron grinned at his chum. "Porky doesn't need to worry about that," Myron went on. "I can't withdraw. If the Faculty put me out, that's another matter. But one thing I can and will do: Old House doesn't need to be mixed up further in this. I can see clearly that if I remain a member ——"



“FELLOWS, I HEREBY RESIGN FROM OLD HOUSE.”—*Page 255.*

“Hey! Hey! None of that,” interrupted voices.

“Let him speak!” commanded Atkins.

“Go on!” yelled out Old Clay.

“If I remain a member, the club will suffer,” continued Myron in the death-like silence which now greeted him. “Therefore, fellows, I hereby resign from Old House.”

CHAPTER XXI

MUTINY

"ARE you crazy?" Johnny Hayes leaped to his feet. "If you go, I go!"

"Me, too!" cried Fatty.

"Imbecile!" snorted Porky, his fists doubled up, his blue eyes glaring at Myron.

Fred Barclay sat silently, his body motionless. Yells and shouts filled the room.

"You shouldn't do that, Myron!" came from some.

"Sure he should!" retorted others.

"You bet he should," yelled out Old Clay. "Yes; and if it's right that he quit the club, it's right that he should withdraw from the Tournament, too!"

Every one began to talk at once, trying to make himself heard.

Bang! went Atkins' gavel. Bang! Bang!

"Order! You fellows!"

Myron, still in the center of the room, remained cool and undisturbed!

"We'll break up the club!" cried out Johnny above the noise.

"No, you won't!" broke in Schoharie the Silent. "Resigning will do neither Old House nor Myron nor you fellows any good."

"Then what did Myron do it for?" demanded John.

"He was right," answered the Silent Man.

"Then why shouldn't he withdraw from everything?"

"Because that would be an admission; and he's not guilty! If Bingo says Myron's guilty, Myron won't be allowed to compete against St. James, anyway."

"Then what's all the fuss about?" It was Porky now, his grin restored. "Why can't Old House wait and give one of its own men as square a deal as Bingo'll give him?"

"Old House is giving him a square deal!" put in Claymore in an ugly tone. "But this school and the club aren't trying Angus. They're only asking him to be decent and withdraw so long as he's under a cloud. You can't deny the fairness of that."

"That's it, boys!" broke in Atkins W. "Clay is right. And what the school wants, certainly

Old House should agree to. We all love Old House, but the school comes first."

"It sure does," added Claymore. "We'll be lucky if all kinds of trouble don't come if Angus tries to go on."

"Aaay! Aaay!" agreed large numbers; but others growled angrily.

"Good-bye, fellows." Myron unnoticed had moved toward the door; now he opened it; waved his arm above his head; and was gone.

Quiet commanded that Old House room for many minutes thereafter.

"What do you think of that?" muttered George Case to Jim Tibbotts a few minutes later as they met on the walk near the Chapel. "I've just seen Claymore. They've bounced Angus from Old House!" George made great effort to control all outward signs of his vast satisfaction.

"Fine!" laughed Jim. "It's fine!"

"This old school is good yet," went on George with a fairly grim smile.

"You bet it is," agreed Jim.

George Case now saw a mental picture of freeing himself forever of any danger from the lead-slug matter. He could beat Myron to a pulp this minute, "the stuck-on-himself chap." George

recalled with bitterness Myron's words to him regarding the Mess Hall bullying of young Hiller last fall. Well, the time for evening of scores had come, all right.

"I guess if Angus had to get out of Old House, Jim," he went on coolly, "the next step is that he should get out of school."

"That's right," replied Tibbotts with admiration for his friend's logic.

"Why, Chatham would kick like everything," continued George, "if St. James should show up Saturday with a man who had been accused of counterfeiting to lead a squad or to wrestle Fred Barclay."

"It certainly would," agreed Tibbotts.

"It's just as if a political party were running a guy for Congress who had been arrested for grand larceny or something and hadn't been tried yet," George further explained. "I guess nobody would think much of that party."

"I should say they wouldn't," said Tibbotts.

George's spirits kept rising. He had not liked the story which had gone the rounds that Taylor W had been in Buffalo all the day before. He had had a disagreeable feeling, akin to instinct, which had been intensified by his encounter with

Porky this morning, that all might not prove well because of that mysterious trip of Porky's.

George often had heard that if you get into a fight, it is best to hit the other man first; only before you hit him, you must be sure that you can hit him so hard he'll land on the ground and . . . stay there.

"Oh, Dicky!" He beckoned to Richards A who approached from the direction of the Armory.

"Did you hear about Angus?" George asked as his Lovering Hall friend came up to him.

"I should say yes!" replied Richards A sullenly. "He ought to quit. Every one is saying so."

The news of the row in Old House indeed had spread with great rapidity. In twos and threes, cadets now gathered on the walk and drive near the horse-block, until about sixty boys made up the crowd. It was nearing dinner-time. Perhaps this fact contributed a mite to the temper displayed by many. Opinion almost to a man was that Myron should withdraw.

"Old House seems to think he's not much, all right!" shot forth Richards A.

"But he never will quit!" came back Tibbotts.

“Of course he won’t,” sneered Richards. “And so far as the Faculty is concerned, he even has a chance still to get the Senior Captaincy for next year.”

“Bunk!” exploded Tibbotts viciously. “He’s just like a criminal! We’d better lose everything against St. James than submit to that!”

“He’s not convicted yet!” Fatty Williams bawled forth suddenly. Fatty apparently was the only one of Myron’s chums present.

“Then why did Bingo practically put him under arrest?” broke in George Case, in a loud and confident voice.

“He let him out again, didn’t he?” returned Fat.

“What about the lead slugs they found in Angus’s alcove then?” retaliated George.

“How do you know any were found there?” Fat fought on.

“Ho!” laughed George. “Everybody knows slugs were found in Angus’s alcove. Anyway, Hiller told me himself, if you want to know.”

“Yes he did.”

“Certainly he did!” lied George. “And now Hiller has skipped from school. If that isn’t confession, what is?”

“Why doesn’t Bingo punish Angus then?” It was Fat’s last valiant stand.

“Probably he will. Give him time!” interjected Richards A viciously.

“Lay off it, Fat!”

“Lay off it!” cried the crowd now in a trifle better humor.

Jim Tibbotts now raised his voice: “I think the corps ought to refuse to drill against St. James Saturday if Angus, while he is still under a cloud, is allowed to command the Manual-of-Arms Squad, or take part in the Single Combats!”

“That’s insubordination, Tibbotts!” sang out Fatty.

“Don’t care if it’s mutiny!” returned Tibbotts, angrily.

Murmurs of approval of Tibbotts were now heard on all sides.

“It would be for the honor of the school!” cried Case. “I’m for going to the Faculty and telling ’em so!”

“Aaay, George! That’s right!” agreed the crowd.

“You bet it is!” shrieked Tibbotts.

“Let’s go to Bingo now!” added Richards.

“Let’s mutiny!” thundered a loud-voiced individual in sudden jubilation.

“Sure!”

“Mutiny!” echoed others.

And the whole crowd took up the shout:

“Mutiny!”

“Mutiny!”

“Mutiny!”

CHAPTER XXII

BINGO

“LET’S go see Bingo then this minute!” cried a pale-skinned lad who that instant with Johnny and Claymore had joined the crowd.

Every eye turned upon Schoharie the Silent. He had taken in the situation in a flash.

“Aaay! Sco!”

The march to the study of the President of Chatham began.

“Gentlemen, I’m going out of town to-day. No harm will be done the school, I assure you,” patiently explained the C. O. from his study doorway, after Richards A, Tibbotts, George, and Claymore had put forth their excited demands. “But no harm, on the other hand, must be done a cadet of this school.”

“But can’t Angus withdraw, sir, at least until he’s cleared?” asked George with an impertinent tinge to his tone.

“There’s no necessity for that, Case,” answered Bingo. “I assure you men that no one

will represent the school against St. James who is not entitled to do so."

"Come on, fellows!" cried Fatty Williams at this. "Colonel says it's all right! That ought to be good enough for any of us!"

Fatty spoke just at the proper moment.

"Of course it's good enough!" echoed Johnny.

And others and others gave voices of approval.

Thereupon the meeting was over. The crowd of cadets scattered about as swiftly as they had come together, some in high humor, others, such as George Case, Tibbotts, Claymore, and Richards A, grumbling.

"What made you do that, Sco?" whispered Johnny Hayes in awe a few minutes later.

Silent let his brief smile appear. "A wise man recognizes another wise man, doesn't he?" Schoharie responded. "I know Bingo. If those guys hadn't gone to him, there might have been real trouble."

"By Jinks!" quoth Johnny impressed beyond words.

George Case was now badly frightened. What with Porky having gone to Buffalo the day before, and with Bingo about to go out of town: to Buffalo beyond doubt, George had no liking

for the turn of affairs: for George knew that young Hiller lived in Buffalo. And also the mutiny had failed; because Bingo had satisfied the fellows! George felt an impulse to skip from school himself; but didn't quite dare.

"Hello! Hello, Fred!" he said nervously just before dinner as he met Fred Barclay in the lower hall. "This is an awful note; isn't it?"

"What is?" demanded Fred, his clear brown eyes fixed upon George's gleaming gray ones.

"That Bingo won't make Angus get out!"

"Are you plumb cuckoo, Case?" came back Fred unexpectedly.

"No; why?" George forced a smile. "I only said what everybody thinks. I thought you'd be for it, anyway, Fred."

"You did; did you? Well, I'm not. I've been neutral all along because Angus and I were going out for the same things. But this has all gone too far. I'm glad Bingo, anyway, is giving him a square deal."

"I didn't mean to make you m-mad, F-Fred," sputtered George.

"You've not," returned Barclay with a cold stare, "because somehow I think, George, you're just plain yellow."

And Fred Barclay held his stare upon George until that worthy turned away in hot confusion.

Most of the school went down-town that afternoon to see the Memorial Day parade; though Porky, Johnny and Myron Angus remained behind.

"You did just right, Myron," declared Johnny as the three sat alone on the Chapel steps.

"Sure he did," agreed Porky belligerently. "I hope Bingo'll have things fixed up by the time St. James gets here."

"So do I," replied Myron simply.

"Wish I knew what he has up his sleeve," commented Porky.

"Maybe he hasn't anything!" chipped in Johnny disconsolately.

Porky and Johnny then went off toward the Gym, while Myron went up to the library to study Latin.

In Porky's heart existed a longing which grew larger the more he thought about it. He wanted to pick a real fight with George Case and thrash him in good earnest; for both he and Johnny were absolutely positive that George was responsible for all Myron's and Old House's troubles, as well as for their own.

"I'm going to lick him now, I am," chuckled Porky.

"He's down-town," objected Johnny.

"I mean I'm going to do it when he comes back," qualified Porky.

At this point, however, an awful thought upset Porky's plan. It was a thought which perhaps changed the life of one and possibly two Chatham cadets. For it is quite probable that had Porky beaten George Case that night, George would have given away to his cowardice, and skipped from school.

"Gee whiz, Jawn!" gasped Porky, "I got that Piety test for to-morrow; and I just got to get out of it somehow!"

"Lots of ways," replied Johnny.

"Sure, I know that." Porky blinked as his thoughts went to Old Hank. "See you later," he said suddenly, and hustled off to the school.

"Come in!" growled a voice as Porky knocked on the door of a room on the third floor.

Porky entered.

Old Hank, in clerical black clothes, sat low in a deep leather chair. A copy of Virgil was in his hand. "What do you want, Taylor?"

"Please, sir, I've come to ask about to-mor-

row's test, sir. I—I—I wanted to study for it, sir."

Old Hank merely stared without speaking.

Porky for the moment could say no more; Old Hank, to tell the truth, had him scared: for Old Hank had little brown eyes and a long square-cut brown beard.

"Oooh!" thought Porky and he swallowed hard. "Please, sir," he managed at last to begin again, "I haven't had much time to study lately, sir. Would you please tell me, sir, what will happen if I don't pass the test?"

Porky now thought he saw a twinkle in Old Hank's little brown eyes—a twinkle which boded no good.

"When I was a boy," the Piety master was saying, "what you are doing this moment, Taylor, was called 'pulling the plug': trying to get out of something by asking the master questions or getting the master interested in matters besides the point."

"Yes, sir," gulped Porky.

"The penalty for failure to-morrow, Taylor, will be enough lines to keep you busy for a week."

"O gee!" exclaimed Porky.

"That's right!" returned Old Hank.

Nevertheless Porky plunged on: "Will you please tell me, sir," he asked, "was Moses really born in the bulrushes or did he just grow up there?"

Old Hank tossed his whiskers upward with the back of his right hand. "Pulling the plug again, eh? Now what do you really want?"

"If—I could get out of that Piety test, sir, for to-morrow," declared Porky with a guileless chuckle, "and maybe have it postponed until Monday, sir, that would be a pretty good thing."

"It would, would it?" Old Hank now laughed; but it was a deep laugh—which came from the bottom of about a foot and a half of whiskers. "Doubtless it would be a pretty good thing, Taylor. But why?"

"The nervous strain, sir," responded Porky as though from a stroke of genius, "the nervous strain, sir."

"Get out of here!" returned Old Hank. "You'll have me giving in in a minute!"

Thus the blow fell.

Forgotten at once were Porky's thoughts of immediate vengeance upon George Case: Porky must direct all his powers of concentration upon

escape from the horrors of the morrow. He didn't know a thing about Piety; and now that Old Hank was "on" to him, the punishment for failure to pass undoubtedly would be worse!

In deep thought, Porky walked down-stairs to the washroom. He'd try anything once, and he was glad Johnny wasn't with him. Other fellows had worked triumphantly what he now contemplated. Whereupon he turned on a cold water faucet, stuck his bare chest under it, then stood in front of an electric fan and switched on the current.

"Pooh!" he ejaculated in disgust after a few minutes. He hadn't even gotten a chill! Catching cold would be too slow, anyway: to-morrow was when he had to be sick; not the day after.

He proceeded to the Armory. T. J. chanced to be standing at the opposite end of the room. Porky managed to slip on the bare floor and to fall heavily. Then he arose with much groaning, and hopped around on one leg. "Oh! Oh! It's busted I guess! Colonel Meadows, it's busted! I'm gone!" he bellowed as he unsuccessfully tried to suppress a grin.

"Can you put it down, man?" asked the Commandant as he ran up.

"Oh! Oh! Let's see, sir, I'll try, sir!" Porky put an arm on T. J.'s shoulder; then slowly straightened his leg toward the floor.

"Can you move it back again, man?"

"Yes, sir."

"It isn't broken, then, Taylor."

"No, sir; but it's probably sprained, though, something terrible. Oh! Oh!"

"Won't do, old man," replied the Commandant softly. "Won't do: I've just seen Mr. Hankey."

Thereupon Porky limped out of the Armory. Next he went to his alcove in Dormitory E, where he made another great effort: he bumped his head against the window sill with the hope that a big lump would cause sufficient sympathy in Mrs. Preston, the matron, to guide him safely throughout the next day.

"What's the matter, cuckoo?" broke in a disturbing voice. "That isn't hard enough!" It was Johnny who had been on a hunt for him.

"Nothing's the matter," answered the Porcupine gruffly. "Only I'm thinking."

Johnny surveyed him with heart-cracking scorn.

Porky gave up all previous schemes; for a new light suddenly came to him.

"I know what!" he concluded to himself. "We get pancakes every Thursday night. Nobody will ever suspect me of anything, if I want to eat a lot of 'em."

His grin returned and he took his usual swat at Johnny.

Hence at supper that night, Porky bet a nickel with every boy near him that he could eat forty pancakes without stopping and could swallow twelve of them without chewing them, provided each boy would contribute a proper number of pancakes.

"Sure I will!" yelled Fatty.

And that began it.

"Come on, you guys!" laughed Porky.

And inasmuch as no master presided at the table where Porky ate, the contributions came thick and fast.

"If he wants to die of internal spontaneous combustion, let him!" laughed Myron from the end of the table.

So Porky ate pancakes and pancakes and then more pancakes, while the crowd at the table counted with accuracy and without mercy. And Porky's ruddy face soon turned a deep red as the perspiration stood out on his forehead.

"Go it, you old Porcupine!" cried Fatty.

"Go it!" added Johnny.

Porky stuck manfully to his task.

"Twenty-four!" counted Johnny.

"Twenty-five!" yelled Fatty.

"Oou!" groaned Porky.

"Twenty-six!—seven!—eight!"

"Swallow the last twelve now without chewing 'em, Pork!" ordered Johnny.

Porky tried his best; he swallowed one; choked; sputtered; gave up.

They carried him out!

But he had won! Old Hank was defeated. For merciful castor oil did the rest. And Porky spent the night in the Infirmary. But he was white and weak and suffering mightily as he lay in bed all the next day.

"Do you think you'll live, Taylor?" inquired Old Hank as the Porcupine crawled out of the Infirmary after twenty-four hours of incarceration.

"Yes, sir," Porky replied with a wan smile. "I'm better now, sir."

"We'll have the test on Monday, then," said Old Hank.

"Thank you, sir," answered Porky meekly.

So during that Friday, which was the day before the St. James Tournament, the school had plenty of excitement: it laughed at Porky; it prepared for the Tournament by shining up and putting in order all military equipment; it wondered what would happen about Myron Angus; it debated regarding the outcome of the Single Combats; and it waited expectantly all day long for the return of Bingo.

Six o'clock, seven o'clock came; but no Bingo; and finally "tattoo" and "taps."

By breakfast the next morning, however, all knew that the Commanding Officer had returned during the night.

But this day was the day of the St. James Tournament. St. James would be on hand by noon. Victory or defeat would be determined within a few hours.

Shortly after Chapel the clear notes of a bugle rang out "first call." Then "assembly" sounded, and the battalion leaped into line.

Myron Angus called the roll of Company A; Sergeant Sands the roll of Company B. Both men about-faced.

"Sir: all are present and accounted for," they reported to their respective captains.

“Company A—Stand at—Ease!” cried forth Captain Atkins.

“Company B—Stand at—Ease!” sang out Captain Varick.

“The school will be dismissed now until noon, when Inspection will be held,” spoke Colonel Thomas Jefferson Meadows, who stepped in front of the battalion. “St. James arrives at one o’clock in time for dinner. Each man of you should see that every bit of his equipment is in perfect shape. The way each cadet is turned out will count much for the school.”

T. J. looked over his cadets. “You’re fine, gentlemen,” he commented. “I’m proud of you; you’ll win, too.” Again he paused but went on quickly, a smile upon his kindly face: “The duty of every cadet to-day is to keep uppermost in his heart loyalty to his corps and faith in its officers.

“Our Squad leader as well as our Single-Combat representatives will remain as previously announced. Chatham expects every man to do his duty!”

CHAPTER XXIII

ST. JAMES ATTACKS

“OLD Myron!” whispered Porky, as the five chums stood near the rifle racks immediately after the battalion had been dismissed. “Do you think this means you’re cleared now, Myron?”

“Not yet,” responded Myron quietly, “or T. J. would have said so.”

“I agree,” offered Schoharie the Silent.

“What else then could T. J. have meant?” asked Johnny.

“I think he meant that Bingo and he feel sure that Myron is all right,” said Schoharie, “but they haven’t quite cleared Myron yet, and that meantime the school should have faith in Bingo and think only of licking St. James.”

Porky looked solemn; Fatty Williams’ big gray eyes grew round; his face was very red.

A small cadet stepped up to Myron.

“Colonel Crawford wishes to see you in his study, Sergeant Angus,” he said respectfully.

Myron started off at once, while the other boys went out to join the large crowd which already had gathered about the horse-block, anxious to miss nothing.

Claymore, Richards A, and Tibbotts stood together.

George Case came out of the building, caught sight of the swarm of cadets, and turned back again.

Atkins W, Varick, Fred Barclay and many other commissioned officers were passing among the crowd and saying to all in sight:

“Get your stuff in ship-shape to-day now!”

“Is your rifle polished O. K.?”

“Is your belt-buckle shined?”

“Hey, you! Get in there and put a better shine on your shoes!”

So nearly every cadet in school, while he possessed much curiosity concerning Angus and the Commandant's undoubted reference to him, centered his mind upon winning the great Tournament.

“If we should win all the Military events, the Tournament would be ours. We wouldn't need to get one of the Single Combats,” declared a long thin fourth-former.

"That's not likely," came from a stout-backed fellow.

"I hope Fred Barclay's in shape, though."

"So do I."

"Have you seen him?"

"You bet! He looks fine, too."

These remarks were typical; so were the following:

"If Fred wins the Platoon Drill and Angus the Manual-of-Arms, we'd only need to win two Single Combats."

"That's right."

"Kind of wish Fred were in the boxing, too."

"So do I."

"But no man could carry all three events against those St. James fellows. They're good. Don't make any mistake about that."

Many noddings of heads took place at this. Then:

"Glad, at that, old Bingo is letting Angus go on. We've just got to win."

"I hope nothing happens!" put in Sergeant Sands, who had been silent up to then.

"We won't let anything happen!" answered Schoharie.

"Huh!" It was Richards A, sarcastically.

"I suppose if Angus is cleared, Sands, you'd even like to see him Senior Captain?"

"I might," replied Sands.

"Well, he won't be cleared. But if he should be, what's he done to be Senior Captain, anyway? Look at Fred Barclay!"

At this moment Johnny Hayes mounted the horse-block with a determination to begin immediately his part in helping to lick Durham. "Fellows," he cried, his long arms extended in front of him, so that his red wrists showed from under his cuffs, "we've only a short while before we have to get ready for Inspection. Let's practise the yell and try the old song.

"Ready now! A 'C. M. S.'! One! Two! Three!" and the crowd responded:

"Ray! Ray! Ray!!
Siss! Siss! Siss!
C. M. S.! C. M. S.! C. M. S.!
Chatham! Chatham! Chatham!"

"Now the song!" cried Johnny, his big mouth wide open. And as Johnny beat time, the cadets sang:

"Oh, here's to dear old Chatham,
The School that we all love!
At 'em! At 'em! At 'em!"

Our war-cry sounds above
The roar of daily strife;
And you can bet your life
We're 'At 'em! At 'em! At 'em!'
For Chatham! Chatham! Chatham!
Whom we love, love, love!"

Soon afterward "first call" for Inspection sounded. The boys rushed into the Armory. "Assembly" was blown.

And then, just as Inspection was completed and the strain of waiting seemed almost more than could be endured, the first notes of a band were heard from the direction of Niagara Falls. Hearts almost stopped as the fighting instinct gripped cadet breasts. Every man knew that St. James Durham at last was nearing Chatham's gates.

The Chatham battalion stood at "Port Arms" on the Armory floor as that St. James music floated in through the open windows.

"Right Shoulder!—Arms!" thundered T. J. at once. He turned to Captains Atkins and Varick. "Durham is a little ahead of schedule!" he said.

Many cadets heard him.

"Right by Squads!—March!" he then cried out. "Column Left!—March!"

The battalion marched out of the Armory : out onto the wide drive where it was swung into battalion front before the main building and brought to a halt. The school band was at the right of the line.

The martial music of St. James Durham drew nearer. The St. James battalion now was well within the Chatham grounds.

“ Present—Arms ! ” commanded Colonel Meadows.

Click ! Click ! Click ! His men obeyed.

Now the St. James band seemed almost upon the Chatham battalion. It was playing *El Capitan*.

But suddenly its music ceased. A low-voiced command from Hertzog was heard. The Chatham band struck up “ The Stars and Stripes Forever.” Never had its music sounded so thrilling. Every Chatham heart tingled. T. J. in front of the line, brought his saber to the salute.

The head of the St. James battalion now reached the right of the Chatham line. The St. James Commandant, a bronzed thin man, his cap pulled down low over his eyes, his cap-band under his chin, passed T. J. With saber raised before him, he returned Colonel Meadows’ salute.

Close at his heels marched the long St. James battalion in columns of fours. Slush! Slush! sounded their feet upon the gravel drive. Their cadet uniforms were blue, with yellow stripes down the outer seam of the trousers legs. The cadets themselves looked big, well set up, and especially fierce in their low-fitting caps, with straps under their chins.

“Column Right!—March!” The command was given by the Commandant of St. James Durham in a sharp staccato. St. James turned in toward the Chatham Armory.

“Look at that Commandant!” thought many a gray-bloused cadet.

“Order!—Arms!” rang out T. J. as the last man of St. James went by.

Click! Click! Click!

The Chatham band then ceased to play.

“Fix!—Bayonets!” cried out Colonel Meadows.

“Stack!—Arms!”

A guard was placed about the Chatham stacked rifles; the Chatham battalion was dismissed; and the cadets thereupon went informally into the Armory to act as hosts to their guests.

“What you guys doing with the yellow stripe on your pants?” asked Johnny, always conversationally inclined, of the St. James man who sat beside him at dinner.

“Cavalry next year,” answered the Durham man laconically.

“Got any horses yet?”

“Thirty of ’em; came yesterday.”

“Phew!” whistled Johnny softly. Somehow this news seemed to Johnny to be a bad omen for the day.

Indeed the magnificent military bearing of the whole St. James battalion forced serious thoughts into the head of many a Chatham cadet that noon.

Shortly after every one had sat down for dinner, Colonel Crawford entered the Mess Hall; and beside him, in the uniform of a Brigadier General of the United States Army, walked a stocky man with a bull neck, a bullet head, and beady eyes.

“General King!” swept over the room in awesome whispers.

“Battalion!—Attention!” commanded T. J., who immediately had jumped to his feet.

“Battalion!—Attention!” came instantly also

from the thin bronzed-faced Durham Commandant, who likewise had leaped up.

Three hundred chairs scraped against the floor; three hundred cadets stood stiffly at attention; General King sat down.

At two o'clock, Guard Mount was scheduled: the first of the competitions.

Even as the cadets marched out from Mess Hall, crowds of visitors were on the campus. Automobiles were parked in every available space on the drive which skirted the campus and wound through the pines to the Lewiston Road.

The day was beautiful and warm with a brilliant high sun. Men and boys in blazers and flannels, ladies and young girls in light-colored summer dresses stood around in groups in the shadow of the pines; and laughed and speculated on the outcome of the great Tournament, which meant so much.

At length the bands, both of which were on the campus, began to play.

"Good luck, Myron!" whispered Porky on the walk.

"Thanks," smiled Myron. "Good luck for the school is more like it, though."

"I know," grinned Porky.

"First call" came from the front of the main building: Chatham's bugle.

The gray-uniformed cadets moved toward their stacked arms.

Schoharie, Fatty, Johnny, all stepped up to Myron and wrung him by the hand. Then Myron suddenly left them, and walked over to the horse-block and Fred Barclay.

"Best of luck on earth, Fred," he said.

"Same to you, old fellow."

And the two finest athletes Chatham had known in years gripped each other's right hands.

"Not so afraid of our chances because of those two men," commented Johnny, "but I didn't like the looks of that battalion much; they sure are well drilled."

"A lot this afternoon, all right, will be on the shoulders of Fred Barclay and Myron Angus in the Single Combats!" replied Fatty Williams.

"Assembly" then was sounded, and Chatham hopped into line. The first of the competitions in the great St. James Tournament was about to begin: Guard Mount.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE MILITARY TOURNAMENT

THERE goes General King now. He is walking slowly in front of the Chatham battalion! Bingo is with him, tall, straight, his gray face slightly flushed, his short gray hair blowing a trifle in the small breeze: Bingo is in khaki, too. The Headmaster of St. James has just arrived. He wears a Major General's uniform.

They are all on their way to the campus where General King is to act as judge.

"Bingo is the best-looking soldier in that bunch, anyway!" whispered Johnny.

"Sure," said Schoharie, also under his breath.

And nearly every Chatham cadet was thinking the same thing.

At last came St. James from out of the Armory. They marched smartly past the Chatham battalion now drawn up in line on the drive in front of the main building and facing them; a moment more, and St. James would be on the campus.

The gray battalion followed the blue almost instantly. T. J. at once lined up his cadets on the west side of the campus between the gymnasium and the big pine below the tennis courts. Then rifles again were stacked; and the command to fall out was given. The temporary relaxation was thoroughly appreciated.

St. James would be first to execute maneuvers. The Mounting of the Guard began prettily, and no mistake. Every Chatham eye watched it intently.

And when the St. James Adjutant finally commanded: "Parade!—Rest! Sound Off!" and as the St. James Band struck the three chords of Sound Off, the Chatham cadets were prepared to state that the job was being mighty well done.

"Guard!—Attention! Close Ranks!—March!" now commanded the St. James Adjutant.

"Present!—Arms!"

"Sir, the Guard is formed!"

Then from the new St. James Officer of the Day: "March the Guard in review, sir!"

Whereat the Guard passed in review with the band playing; and the Adjutant and the Commander of the Guard saluted the Officer of the

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Day together; and the leaders of the platoons and the Drum and Sergeant Majors saluted.

Thus finally the St. James Guard was considered mounted; and left the campus.

Tremendous applause from all sides followed. Chatham cheered them again and again.

Bugle-calls rang out: "first call"; then "assembly." Chatham leaped into line.

The Chatham Guard Mount also was done superbly. Varick acted as Commander of the Guard; Myron Angus as Sergeant Major.

But when all was over, General King's beady eyes didn't even blink as he announced quietly to the St. James Headmaster and to Bingo:

"Durham's event."

The score of the Tournament therefore was:

Chatham 0.	St. James 1.
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The Platoon Drill came next, with Chatham leading off. Second Lieutenant Fred Barclay was in command. The gray-bloused cadets who were not in his platoon yelled:

"Ray! Ray! Ray!
Siss! Siss! Siss!
C. M. S.! C. M. S.! C. M. S.!
Chatham! Chatham! Chatham!"

Fred Barclay's dark eyes flashed. He had drilled hard number one platoon of Company A, and he felt confident. Angus was his platoon Sergeant and second in command; George Case was a platoon guide.

Again bugles sounded "first call"; then "assembly." Fred's men jumped into their double-rank formation: Case at the right, Angus behind the right flank man of the rear rank. Fred stood before the center of the line. Every man in the platoon could see amongst the pines the faces of the audience before him. Every man appeared fixed with determination.

Then suddenly directly in front of Case a slight movement took place in the crowd. A newcomer had arrived: a man; and with him was a small black-haired boy, with a thin pale face, upon which were set thick spectacles.

The boy was in citizen's clothes; but George Case recognized him at once, and nearly collapsed at the fateful sight.

"Sir, Lieutenant Barclay, please," spoke out Case, half aloud, his voice shaking, "may I be—be excused, sir? I'm—I'm sick, sir——"

Fred Barclay stepped up to Case quickly. "Sick! You'll be dead," he spat forth in a

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hoarse mutter, "if you open up your face like that again."

"Y-yes—sir."

"What's the matter with you?"

"N-nothing, sir. That is—y-you di-didn't see, sir."

"I saw nothing; and neither did you!"

Fred Barclay returned to his post.

The drill went on; was concluded in its time allotment of ten minutes. And Fred and number one platoon of Company A had given a magnificent show to the visitors, their judge, and the school.

The moment it was over, and while applause still was ringing forth, Colonel Meadows came up to Case and in an undertone said: "Colonel Crawford wishes to see you, Case, in his study, as soon as the Tournament is finished. You may go to your alcove now and remain there under guard until sent for, or you may stay here in plain sight and watch the Tournament. Take your choice."

"I'll stay here, sir," murmured George, his face deathly white.

But Johnny and Fatty each had heard T. J.

"Myron! Myron!" they chortled in glee.

“Get this! Get this!” and they whispered swiftly the information they had gleaned.

“Never mind,” replied Myron. “We want to see this drill.”

The St. James platoon already had started; and how it did drill! Applause from everywhere broke forth spontaneously as evolution followed evolution, each splendidly done. Soon though the drill was over.

“Ray! St. James! Ray! St. James!
Jiminy! Jiminy! Jiminy!
Raaaaaaay! St. James! Durham!”

cheered the blue-coated cadets, who were not with the drilling platoon.

But Fred Barclay had drilled his men like a master. The stocky bull-necked General announced quietly:

“Chatham’s event!”

“Oh! Wow!”

Chatham cadets yelled and danced and hugged one another.

Score now:

Chatham 1.	St. James 1.
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“Angus!”

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"Yes, sir," Myron swung around. The C. O. of Chatham was at his shoulder.

"Hiller is here, as you've probably seen," said Bingo, his gray face as usual quite expressionless. "Put this paper in your pocket and read it later. Be sure not to lose it. You'll have to hurry now. Your Manual-of-Arms Squad is next on the program."

"Thank you, sir." Myron put a folded paper into his right hip-pocket; saluted; hurried off to the gymnasium at the end of the campus, to get his Star Squad ready.

Another bugle call was sounding. Myron gathered his squad around him: Sco, Johnny, Drum Major Hertzog, Fatty, Dickson, Beatty A, Beatty W. Only one thought could be with Myron now. The score was tied. The Star Squad must win.

"Fellows, listen for the commands; concentrate; keep cool!" he said easily and with a smile. "Then we've got 'em. Come on, boys! Fall in!"

A great yell from the crowd on the campus went up. It was for the St. James Manual-of-Arms Star Squad which at that moment had finished its drill.

And then, under Atkins W's leadership, a chorus of Chathamites sang:

“ Oh, here's to dear old Chatham
 The School that we all love!
 At 'em! At 'em! At 'em!
 Our war-cry sounds above
 The roar of daily strife;
 And you can bet your life
 We're 'At 'em! At 'em! At 'em!'
 For Chatham! Chatham! Chatham!
 Whom we love, love, love! ”

Myron marched his men out on the center of the campus; swung them in front of the audience and General King. Near T. J. and not far from the General stood George Case—Case the liar!

For a moment only Myron gazed upon him; then his voice rang out:

“ Squad!—Halt! ”

His Squad stopped as one man; the rifles came to the order as with one blow.

“ Right! Shoulder!—Arms! ”

Click! Click! Click!

“ Port!—Arms! ”

Click! Click!

“ Order!—Arms! ”

And so on through the whole category. The Star Squad obeyed each time in perfect unison.

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General King smiled. T. J., Bingo, even the St. James Headmaster did likewise. Applause from all sides was given heartily and almost continuously.

And as all was over, General King declared emphatically:

“Chatham wins!”

“Yeay! Yeaaaaay!”

Hats flew high. Chatham fellows yelled and pounded one another. The score now was:

Chatham 2. St. James 1.

“Old Myron! Fine!” burst forth Fred Barclay enthusiastically as Myron dismissed his Squad.

“You started the winning streak, though, Fred,” grinned Myron happily.

Now Myron was forced to hurry away in order to change from his fatigue blouse into his dress coat for the Review, which was the last event before the Single Combats. As he ran toward the gymnasium, where his clothes were laid out, he pulled the note from his hip-pocket; read it swiftly; slammed it back into his pocket; drew a deep breath; ran on again.

The Review of the Troops by General King was

accomplished without delay. St. James passed by first, with Chatham immediately behind them.

It is not necessary to draw out the details of that Review. Quite plainly in movements of military units larger than a platoon, St. James that day excelled Chatham.

General King's decision was quickly announced.

When the Review was over, the St. James Band played, "Hail! Hail! The Gang's All Here!"

The Tournament then would be decided by the Single Combats! For the score now stood: 2 to 2.

The Chatham battalion marched into the Armory; put away its rifles. St. James stacked arms on the campus.

Five minutes later, the gymnasium was crowded. In the center of the floor the arena for wrestling was ready, called a "ring" in spite of its shape. It was twenty feet square, well equipped with padded mat and proper ropes.

"My! Look at Fred!" exclaimed Fatty Williams in admiration.

Already Barclay was standing in his corner in sleeveless gymnasium outfit, his back resting easily against the ropes.

"He's in fine trim, all right," commented Myron in admiration.

"Three cheers for Barclay!" cried out Joġnny.
"Hip! Hip!" and the crowd yelled:

"Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!
Barclay, old boy!"

"Three cheers for Henderson!" It was a voice from St. James. The blue responded:

"Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!
Henderson, old boy!"

Henderson, St. James's wrestling champion, stepped into the ring. He was a bigger fellow even than Fred—fully six feet, one, and weighing at least one hundred and ninety pounds. Henderson looked the part of a great wrestler. He shook a shaggy blond head and scowled at Fred from underneath shaggy blond eyebrows.

Two bouts of four minutes each would be wrestled. And if no falls occurred, the man who had showed the greater aggressiveness and wrestling ability would be declared the winner.

"Are you ready, men?" the referee, Captain Edmonds from Fort Niagara, called from the center of the ring.

Both wrestlers nodded.

CHAPTER XXV

SINGLE COMBAT

“ TIME! ” The gong on the Gym wall sounded!

Barclay and Henderson approached each other; smiled; shook hands; stood off from each other momentarily. Each had his left foot forward, his arms bent and far before him, his body slightly stooped, muscles flexed, chin low.

For a few seconds, they feinted for position. Then Fred moved as for the St. James man's head; Henderson raised his eyes and hands.

Fred dived toward the floor; grabbed the outside of Henderson's left heel with his right hand; and, at the same moment, hurled his left shoulder against the inside of Henderson's left knee, as his own left arm went around the knee and his hand gripped it.

“ Oh, wow! ” yelled the Chatham crowd.

“ Look out! ” warned St. James Durham.

Surprise and fear shot into the Durham wrestler's face.

Simultaneously Fred dropped to his own right

knee, forced his body well under Henderson's and pressed with all his power outward and backward.

Henderson saw that he must fall; but now, wisely, instead of fighting back, he attempted to turn clear to the left; step cleanly over Fred and so reach a safe position on hands and knees.

But Fred's quickness was too much for him. Fred landed him into a semi-reclining position, the point of his left elbow supporting his body upright on the floor. Fred pushed his chest in between Henderson's legs, lifted the bigger man's left leg and foot, and so compelled Henderson to turn slightly to the right; then Fred, still keeping his body between his opponent's legs, arose; while with the same movement he slid his arms around Henderson's thighs and raised them upward.

St. James was awestruck.

"A fall! A fall!" yelled Chatham excitedly.

But not yet!

For while Henderson's head and arms now flopped to the floor with his face and chest upward, his shoulders were far from down.

"Barclay! Barclay! Barclay!" shrieked Chatham.

Fred held to his work coolly, relentlessly. The St. James man writhed and fought. But Fred had those big thighs in a vise-like grip and he pushed himself slowly forward and downward over his opponent's upturned body, until finally weight and strength forced the shoulders of the St. James man flat against the mat.

Chatham went wild.

A minute's intermission followed; and this time when the wrestling again had started, Henderson was caught almost immediately in a flying mare; was downed in less than fifty seconds.

"Yow! Wow!"

"O boy!"

"Who said that big guy could wrestle?" cried Johnny.

"All he can do is make faces!" thundered Fatty.

The crowd danced and yelled.

The Tournament score now stood:

Chatham 3. St. James 2.

"Are you all right, Fred, to go into gymnastics after a ten-minutes' rest?" asked Monty anxiously.

"Sure," replied Fred, with a smile.

"He ought not to be made to go, Colonel Meadows," protested Monty. "They're putting in a fresh man."

"We've had that privilege; but we've told them Barclay would represent us," answered T. J. "We can ask no favors."

"I'm all right," repeated Fred.

While Fred still was resting from wrestling, the St. James gymnast began his exhibition.

Chatham saw at once that the work of Fred's rival on both the horizontal and parallel bars was marvelous in all ordinary movements. But he had no Giant's Swing either forward or backward.

"That's where Fred will get him," murmured Myron.

Now the Durham man finished. Again came applause. Breathlessly Chatham awaited Fred's appearance.

Once more Fred stepped out onto the floor. He appeared cool and strong; his cheeks were ruddy, and without a sign of strain in them; his big arm-muscles rippled as he moved.

Myron Angus, fascinated, watched Fred's graceful leap up to the parallels; watched the beautiful short and long arm dips; beheld him

finish them and walk, amidst cheers, to the horizontal. He chinned himself easily; first with one hand and then with the other; stood off a couple of feet, leaped up to the bar, did an upstart, and then a perfect forward Giant's Swing. Never had Myron seen him more wonderful.

"Better go in now and change your things, old fellow, and get ready for boxing," cautioned T. J. at Myron's shoulder.

"All right, sir," smiled Myron as he turned his head. "Isn't Fred great though? We've got the Tournament won, sir. He's done it!"

"Wouldn't be surprised," grinned T. J. "But you get in and show them what a real boxer can do, anyway, and we'll pile up a score."

"I'll try, sir." Myron took a last admiring look at Fred and started to leave the floor to get into his boxing togs.

Then suddenly there went up a terrible groan of agony from the crowd; and a thud of something heavy striking the floor sounded throughout the building.

Myron rushed back. Fred had fallen! It was that backward Giant's Swing. Fred's grip had loosened as his body at arms' length with head down was in a perpendicular position above the

bar, and he had dropped to the floor like a plummet. He had not had enough time for rest.

But Fred had managed to break his fall with his hands. Now he was again upon his feet. He wanted to try that backward Giant's once more.

"No," the referee shook his head. "You've had your chance, my boy," he said and called out:

"St. James's event!"

The Tournament score was

Chatham 3.

St. James 3.

Myron Angus's jaws closed tight. Defeat or victory for the school at last depended upon him. Automatically he again started on his way to change his clothes. He wasn't thinking of George Case now, or of lead slugs, the Senior Captaincy, or anything save a plan for this battle which was at hand.

Three rounds of two minutes each, with a minute interval between them was what the bout called for.

Myron did not speak as he slipped into his sleeveless jersey. Schoharie and Porky helped him to tighten his belt.

On the Gym floor Chatham and St. James cheered and sang.

"I've seen their man, Myron," whispered Monty, "and talked with a lot of fellows who have seen him box; he's a little bigger than you, and a slugger. Don't mix it with him, boy. But you can beat him if you go after him from the gong by fast, scientific boxing."

Myron nodded. He was ready.

"Ray! St. James! Ray! St. James! Ray! St. James!
Jiminy! Jiminy! Jiminy!
Raaaaaaay! St. James! . . . Durham!
Gray! Old Boy!"

came from one hundred and seventy-odd throats.

Myron's black eyes flashed; a slight smile flitted across his face.

"Ray! Ray! Ray!
Siss! Siss! Siss!
C. M. S.! C. M. S.! C. M. S.!
Chatham! Chatham! Chatham!
Angus! Old boy!"

whipped back instantly.

"Aaaaaaaay!"

Gray, the St. James valiant, was at the battle point.

"Come on, Myron," said Monty.

The four started out from the dressing-room built for the occasion. The crowd on the Gym floor seemed tremendous.

"Aaay! Aaaay! Three cheers for Myron Angus!" It was Johnny Hayes' voice, followed by the thunders of Chatham: "Hip! Hip!"

"Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!
Myron Angus! Myron Angus! Myron Angus!
Tiger!"

Monty left them to join T. J.

Schoharie and Porky escorted Myron through the crowd to the ring.

"Fight your own game, old fellow," murmured Porky, as he held up a rope of the ring so that Myron could crawl through.

"That's best," added the Silent Man.

Again Myron nodded.

"Are you all right?" whispered Porky and grinned.

"Yes," answered Myron.

Porky and Schoharie pulled the big ten-ounce gloves on Myron's hands.

The referee was at his post in the center of the mat. Two judges were at the ropes. In

a corner of the ring diagonally across from Myron stood the St. James boxer.

"Are you ready, men?" called the referee.

Myron and Gray of St. James quickly approached each other; smiled; and shook hands before the referee.

Not a murmur was heard from the crowd.

The gong sounded! Time!

Monty was right: Gray jumped into the *mêlée* on the instant. He was a rugged chap of perhaps one hundred and seventy pounds, and was about two inches taller than Angus. Apparently it was his purpose immediately to run Myron off his feet; then batter him down. He scarcely made a preparatory feint but instantly rushed and began to throw blow after blow toward Myron's body and head.

Angus, however, had learned his lessons in the hard school presided over by Fred Barclay. He gave way before Gray's attack; side-stepped; slipped easily from dangerous blows by slight movements of his head; blocked; ducked; and now and again countered viciously.

The first round ended amidst cheers. But the loudest came from Gray's schoolmates.

"Are you sure you're all right, old fellow?"

asked Porky, anxiously, as Schoharie and he sponged the perspiration from Myron's face during the one minute interval.

Myron nodded.

"Wouldn't let him get too big a lead this round," whispered Schoharie.

Once more Myron nodded.

The gong! Time!

Silence and anxiety held equal mastery over both schools.

Again the St. James man rushed. He shot a straight right to the body and left to the face. Myron blocked both; but this time did not give way. Gray stepped backward a pace; hesitated a moment; then with left elbow slightly bent, suddenly moved forward again; straightened his arm and sent a left glove for Myron's chin.

"Oh! Wow!" broke from the crowd.

Myron, however, put his own right hand across his face, took the blow on his palm; and with his left fist delivered a stinging smash flush against the St. James man's jaw.

Gray's head went back.

And Myron, with that old tiger-like movement he had shown against Fred earlier in the week, leaped into his man. Rights and lefts—One!

Two! One! Two! One! Two! fell against Gray's eyes, nose, mouth; and finally—one terrific blow hit Gray's jaw.

Gray, surprised, hurt, bewildered, staggered backward. Myron was on top of him every moment. Chatham shrieked:

“Oh! Oh! Oh!
Angus! Angus! Angus!”

“Stall!” “Clinch!” “Grab him!” begged St. James.

Gray, in desperation, tried to clinch. Myron literally pounded him off.

Then the St. James man, his back to the ropes, took to a safety block: right forearm across his face; chin in bend of elbow; left arm close to the body, upper part across heart, forearm against pit of stomach; and, thus protected, forced his way back to the center of the ring. It was his best course at the time.

“Angus! Angus! Angus!” yelled frantic Chathamites.

But the gong rang. Time!

Round two was over. Chatham shouted and cheered. So also did St. James.

Everything of importance on this earth, it

seemed now, depended upon this last round about to come.

The gong!

The two boxers approached each other: Gray with more caution apparently than Angus.

Myron led; missed.

Gray countered with a tremendous right to Myron's temple.

"Oh!" It was a groan from Johnny. All else was still.

Myron staggered backward; his jaws opened; the pupils of his eyes rolled upward and let the whites show.

"He's gone!" shrieked a voice.

Then the tension broke. Chatham yelled beseechments. St. James thundered encouragements.

Gray was on Myron instantly. He shot a left to Myron's cheeks. The blow straightened Myron.

"Clinch! Clinch!" pleaded Chatham in desperation.

And then—that stout heart in Myron's breast responded. With all his will power he gathered himself together; threw himself upon Gray.

"Break!" shouted the referee.

On the instant, Myron obeyed. His head at last was clear again. To regain his bearings, he danced backward and away from his opponent.

"Wow! Wow! That's it, old fellow!" cheered his schoolmates.

Then Gray came on him once more, wild, determined, destructive.

Myron in perfect boxing posture, awaited him. Gray hesitated a fraction of an instant. Myron feinted with his left for Gray's body; the St. James man's guard dropped; and Myron's right arm shot forward with all the power of his splendid body behind it.

"Aaay! Yeeaay!"

The Chatham cadets leaped into the air. Hats flew high! For Cadet Gray of St. James Durham was seated on the floor, his legs spread out flat; while both big gloved hands ran aimlessly over his hair, and he grinned foolishly.

"One! Two! Three! Four! Five! Six! Seven! Eight! Nine! Ten!" counted the referee. Then he turned and held up the right arm of Myron Angus.



MYRON'S RIGHT ARM SHOT FORWARD. — *Page 310.*

CHAPTER XXVI

FORTITER, FIDELITER, FELICITER

VICTORY! And on the shoulders of Myron Angus! Score 4 to 3! The great Tournament was over.

Myron hurried to the dressing-room and his rubdown. Porky, Schoharie, Fatty Williams and Johnny Hayes helped him to dress. A crowd of Old House men and dozens of others surrounded them, Fred Barclay included.

"You're the pluckiest, finest athlete I know," declared Fred, his big brown eyes shining, as he thrust forth his hand.

"Thanks, Fred," replied Myron happily as he took Fred Barclay's grip. "I didn't do one bit more than you. And I'm awfully sorry you fell, Fred."

Soon the majority of both schools ran pell-mell out to the campus, where they gave cheer upon cheer lustily, and Chatham sang pæans of victory.

Porky, unnoticed, had disappeared from the dressing-room a few minutes after Myron had entered it. But as the yells and songs resounded from the campus, he returned; and was leading George Case by the arm.

“Own up!” ordered Porky in a terrific voice as he stopped his man before Myron, Fred Barclay, Johnny, Fatty, Schoharie and at least twenty others. “Own up before them all as you just have to me. Did you put those lead slugs in Myron’s alcove? Tell Myron; and be quick about it!”

George Case, his face still deathly white, with only the red pimples to break the lack of color, answered in a frightened stammer, “Y-yes, sir.”

“I told him I wouldn’t hit him, Myron, if he came across to you,” declared Porky. “And I won’t—provided he doesn’t stay here too long. Do you want him any more?”

“No,” replied Myron without comment.

Porky turned to Case. “Beat it,” he ordered, “before I break my word and sock you!” But he held him a moment longer and demanded fiercely, “Is Colonel Crawford through with you?”

“N-no, sir.”

“All right. I’ve got to let you go alive then. Beat it!”

A half-hour later, “first call” was sounded on the campus by the St. James bugler; and just before “assembly” was blown Durham gave forth its parting yell:

“Ray! St. James! Ray! St. James! Ray! St. James!
Jiminy! Jiminy! Jiminy!
Raaaaay! St. James! Durham!
Chatham! Chatham! Chatham!”

Then came the answer from more than one hundred Chatham throats:

“Ray! Ray! Ray!
Siss! Siss! Siss!
C. M. S.! C. M. S.! C. M. S.!
St. James! St. James! St. James!
Durham!”

“Three cheers and a tiger for St. James Durham!” thundered Johnny, and Chatham responded with all its voice:

“Hip! Hip!
Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!
Tiger!”

The St. James bugler sounded “assembly.”

The blue-coated battalion once again jumped into line.

The Chatham bugler then brought Chatham without rifles to attention. Its cadets stood at battalion front on the west edge of the campus and faced across the vast green. Colonel Meadows took his position before the center of his line of boys.

The St. James band struck up. The blue uniformed column again was approaching and would pass before Chatham.

"Hand!—Salute!" cried forth T. J. as St. James drew near.

Every Chatham right hand came to the visor of every cadet cap. And this position was held while the St. James cadet corps at the salute from right shoulder arms passed by. Its long blue line was in columns of fours, its band played before them; its thin, bronzed Commandant was at its head. So it marched on down the campus to the pine-lined drive, and homeward over the Lewiston Road.

That night a huge bonfire blazed on the lawn before the main building and Chatham sang a song of triumph which Johnny Hayes had composed for the occasion:

“Hail to thee! Hail to thee! Greatest of Chatham
guys!

Doughty deeds always your muscles have won.
Cleavers of thick skulls and crunchers of big thighs,
May many years pass ere your wild race is run!”

Then Porky rose and roared:

“Three cheers for Barclay and Angus!
Hip! Hip!”

And the boys answered so that the sound
crashed against the ivy-covered school in a bel-
lowing echo.

“What’s the matter with Barclay and An-
gus?” called out the Porcupine.

“They’re all right!”

“Who’s all right?”

“Barclay and Angus!”

All now knew of course of Porky’s work with
Hiller’s father and that Bingo’s visit to Buffalo
had finished what Porky had begun; that Case
had confessed; and that Myron was vindicated.

“Fellows, I don’t need to say why,” called out
Fred Barclay from the center of the crowd, “but
let’s give one more big cheer for Myron Angus!”

And it was given with tigers upon tigers at
the end.

Old House held a quick meeting in Atkins W’s

room just before "tattoo" ; and Myron was re-elected to membership.

"I tell you! I'm mighty glad you're back, Myron!" declared the Senior Captain earnestly.

Myron smiled his happiness. "So am I," he replied.

"Angus, I think you should show these boys Hiller's letter," said T. J. a few minutes later as Myron, Schoharie, Porky, Johnny, Fatty, Fred, and a half-dozen other Old House men stood at the doorway of the Commandant's room.

Myron drew from his hip pocket the paper which Bingo had given him. "Will you read it to them then, sir, please?" he asked, and handed the note to the Commandant.

"DEAR ANGUS:" read Colonel Meadows:

"I've told my dad everything. At first I didn't dare tell, but now I've told him you never were with me. Case was almost always with me. I gave him slugs the day slugs were found in your alcove. I don't know whether Case put them there.

"I never gave you any slugs, Angus. Dad says the manly thing is to come here and face things out and face Case and ask your pardon. Please forgive me, will you?

"THOMAS HILLER."

T. J. handed the letter back to Myron. "Case

has confessed all to Colonel Crawford," he commented. "For Mr. Hiller, as soon as he really understood the entire situation, got his boy to act. Case put those slugs in Angus's alcove."

"Oh, the ——" Johnny stopped. "Porky did do a lot of good then, sir," he ended emphatically.

"Of course!"

"Shucks! Don't act foolish, John," admonished the Porcupine.

Not a word more from the boys for a moment, until Fatty asked, "Will Hiller be back next year, sir?"

"That's doubtful," responded T. J. "It's hardly necessary, either; he'll make good somewhere."

"What about Case then, sir?" asked Johnny wickedly.

"Now why bring that up, Bonehead?" put in Porky with a laugh in which all joined; for all were aware that Case had left school less than an hour before while the bonfire still blazed on the lawn and the songs and cheers of victory went heavenward.

"Just one thing more, please, sir." It was Porky again. "I'm dead sure Case put those chocolates in Myron's room that night, sir. I

forgot to ask Case. Did he confess that, too, sir? ”

“ Yes,” answered T. J. “ He admitted to the President that he put them there. He told Richards that Hiller had given them to Sergeant Angus. Presumably Case did it to turn suspicion from himself if he should be caught in the lead-slug matter.”

Two days after, on Monday, June 3rd, a tall, thin, gray-haired man stepped before the battalion line at Chapel formation. The Chatham Commandant brought the cadets to “ rest.”

Colonel Crawford looked up and down the battalion a moment. He was smiling slightly and in his gray face a touch of red was rising. “ It is difficult to row a boat against the tide, gentlemen,” he began in his low even tones. “ It takes courage to go about one’s business with head high when things are going wrongly. I am sure you have all many times read in the School Catalog John Chatham’s letter written shortly after he founded this school. He gave us then as a motto: ‘ *Fortiter, Fideliter, Feliciter!* ’ He thought that the highest qualities a man could develop were to live courageously, loyally, cheerfully. To the cadet of this battalion who has

come the nearest during the year to living up to the acme of these qualities should go the highest honor of the school. There is no question as to which boy should receive that honor now!" Bingo paused; turned his head toward the right of the cadet line; then went on: "Hence it is my pleasure to announce that the Senior Captain for next year will be Cadet Sergeant Myron Angus!"

A moment's silence; then it seemed that the Armory walls of old Chatham would crack from the cheers upon cheers which followed.

THE END

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